Daily Report

Latin America

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FBIS-LAT-92-027 *10 February 1992*

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Latin American Leaders Support Venezuela's Perez

PA0402143492 Caracas Venezolana de Television Network in Spanish 1117 GMT 4 Feb 92

["Declaration by the Presidents of America" issued in Bogota on 4 February]

[Text] The presidents hereby state their deep concern over news about a subversive attack on Venezuela's democratic institutions. In expressing their full solidarity with the legitimately elected president of Venezuela, Carlos Andres Perez—a symbol of the people's will as expressed in the polls—the presidents very respectfully urge the Venezuelan people and their civilian and military forces to most vigorously back legality to safeguard a genuine American democracy.

The presidents state their position in favor of constitutional normalcy, of safeguarding it, and of guaranteeing the supremacy of democratic liberties.

This communique is signed by Presidents Cesar Gaviria, Colombia; Carlos Salinas, Mexico; Alberto Fujimori, Peru; Jaime Paz Zamora, Bolivia; Rodrigo Borja, Ecuador; Rafael Angel Calderon, Costa Rica; Luis Alberto Lacalle, Uruguay; Andres Rodriguez, Paraguay; Fernando Collor de Melo, Brazil; Violeta Barrios de Chamorro, Nicaragua; Jorge Serrano, Guatemala; Carlos Menem, Argentina; Alfredo Cristiani, El Salvador; Guillermo Endara, Panama; and Patricio Aylwin, Chile.

Rio Group 'Declaration of Caracas' Cited

PA0902024092 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 0052 GMT 9 Feb 92

[Text] Caracas, 8 Feb (NOTIMEX)—On 8 February, the Rio Group rejected the coup attempt against the Venezuelan Government and said that any attack on Latin American democracy is an attack on the principles on which the solidarity of American states is based.

In a document called the "Declaration of Caracas," the 13 foreign ministers of the group of consultation and political coordination also voiced their unshakable commitment to the defense of human rights and representative democracy.

The foreign ministers of Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, Colombia, Chile, Ecuador, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, Venezuela, Costa Rica, and Jamaica met on 8 February in Caracas in an act of solidarity with President Carlos Andres Perez.

In the document read to the Venezuelan president at the Miraflores Palace, the 13 Latin American nations stated their repudiation of the attempt to disavow the legitimacy of a democratically elected government.

"The foreign ministers of the Rio Group, deeply concerned with the coup attempt and attack on the life of the Venezuelan president voice our most absolute rejection of these facts which attempt to disrupt the current process of democratic consolidation in the Latin American and Caribbean region."

"We express our strongest repudiation of these grave events that attempted to disavow the legitimacy of a government, which was elected by the sovereign will of the people, and to disrupt the existing state of law."

"We renew the commitment of our governments to defend human rights and representative democracy."

"We stress the effective, immediate, and vigorous regional and international reaction to this attempt to subvert institutional and democratic order, which shows the strength of representative democracy in the region," the document added.

"We also reiterate that any attack against democracy in a Latin American or Caribbean country constitutes an attack against the principles on which the solidarity of American states is based," the document indicated.

"We express our sincere congratulations and great admiration of the noble Venezuelan people, the government of President Carlos Andres Perez, and the military and police forces for the calmness, courage, and efficacy with which they managed to preserve the democratic institutions," the document added.

During the ceremony in which the declaration was delivered to the Venezuelan president, Carlos Andres Perez reiterated that de facto governments are no longer acceptable in Latin America, because unity has been consolidated in the region.

He added that Latin Americans can proclaim that democracy is definitively the government system and way of life of all the nations, because there is a resolve to support one another and to abandon the message of totalitarian adventure.

"The aggression against any one of us will be against all the countries and we will all respond so that there will not be the slightest doubt that never again will there be another dictatorship to stain the dignity of our people and to interrupt the progress that we have responsibly and historically been achieving," the Venezuelan president concluded.

Guatemalan Official Praises Regional Meeting

PA0602145592 Guatemala City EL GRAFICO in Spanish 4 Feb 92 p 4

[Text] Foreign Minister Gonzalo Menendez Park has announced that positive results were obtained at the meeting of foreign ministers in San Pedro Sula, Honduras between 29 and 31 January.

Participating in the meeting were the Central American countries and the Caribbean Common Market [Caricom]. The purpose of the meeting was to exchange points of view on the politcial and economic challenges faced by both regions, examine their needs, identify mutually interesting

and beneficial issues, and establish a permanent mechanism that can be used to foster increased cooperation.

Menendez Park said they examined joint economic, scientific, technological, and cultural initiatives, and considered the possibility of cooperation in such fields as transportation, tourism, environment, natural disasters, and drug trafficking.

Also discussed were the political and social issues that emerge at relevant regional and international institutions; regional and international trade in areas of common interest and benefit; areas of investment; and the strengthening of diplomatic relations among their states.

Menendez Park added that the foreign ministers agreed to establish a Caricom-Central America consultation forum at the ministerial, technical, and other levels. They also agreed to promote their private sectors' development, to create stronger direct ties among their private sectors, and to allow these private sectors to participate in the forum when necessary.

Cuba

Colin Powell's 'New Arrogant Style' Examined

FL0702211592 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1320 GMT 7 Feb 92

[Frank Aguero Gomez article from 7 February GRANMA: "Colin Powell and His Political Ambitions"]

[Text] As part of an unusual increase in visits by high-ranking U.S. Armed Forces officers to the Guantanamo Naval Base, General Colin Powell on 6 January visited this installation, which the United States occupies against the will of our people. Recently, more than 40 visits have been made to this enclave, including those by high-ranking military officers, such as the head of the Atlantic Command, who has done so on three different occasions.

On this occasion, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staffs of the U.S. Armed Forces spoke to members of the joint task force which apparently remains there because of the large number of Haitian refugees. Under the pretext of wishing them a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, the famous strategist of the Panama invasion, acting for the President and the secretary of defense, offered moral support to the troops stationed there as a result of the serious problems caused by the U.S. Government's refusal to allow the Haitians to enter U.S. territory.

As the international press has reported, on the morning of 16 December, more than 700 of those armed men made a violent operation against one of these Haitian refugee camps, where no less than 2,500 men, women, and children were gathered. In a show of operational strength, they destroyed everything. The Haitians had been protesting the poor nutritional and living conditions, which had caused the death of a pregnant woman.

To exalt the inglorious role of the Yankee military forces as an instrument of the U.S. Government's aggressive policy, Powell referred to his most recent Christmases in Panama and the Persian Gulf and used numerous jingoistic words to describe the troops sent to Guantanamo. He defined them as young men proud to carry out any mission the nation may set for them, whether in Korea or Germany; under the seas of the world in submarines, amphibious boats, landing craft in the Mediterranean; or even in the desert of Saudi Arabia. He later used the language characteristic of President Bush in crediting himself with the victorious disappearance of socialism in the East European countries and the crumbling of the USSR. More than once he emphasized that they had overthrown the Soviet Union.

His statements clarify the Pentagon's intentions, following the Soviet Union's disappearance, to find a new justification for the enormous U.S. defense budget. Powell said: We will have some challenges this year and for several years to come, because the enemy we have been preparing to confront over the past four years [as heard] has disappeared. The USSR no longer exists; we defeated it. Our political system, democracy, and America's vigilance during these four years have defeated it.

Furthermore, he ratified the principle of the invincibility of the forces employed against Iraq, when he said: We are determined to make sure that any force that can be destroyed or that cannot carry out the mission assigned to it in the future will not be mobilized.

We should remember that under the euphoria of the success in the Gulf, and in an interview published by the armed forces newspaper ARMY TIMES on 15 April 1991, General Colin Powell said: I am getting rid of the demons. I am getting rid of the villains. All I have left is Fidel Castro and Kim Il-song.

On this occasion, Powell repeated veiled threats against Cuba to his troops, when he said: There is still danger in the world. He stressed: That is why we have 1,700 young men and women in places such as Guantanamo. There is still a mission that needs to be fulfilled. This nation needs to be defended. Because we are the only superpower remaining in the world, people count on us. It is good to be a superpower. It is good to have friends who count on us, and it is good to have enemies who are in mortal fear of us. We must remain that way.

At the same time these remarks were made in Guantanamo by the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, George Bush encouraged his troops in South Korea to remain in that country as long as they are wanted and needed. As if all this were not enough, a dispatch dated 4 February from Washington states that General Colin Powell said that the U.S. military potential should frighten the world in order to maintain order and stability.

Concerning these comments, GRANMA asked Division General Ulises Rosales del Toro, first vice minister of the Revolutionary Armed Forces [FAR] and chief of the Cuban General Staff, for his views on the new arrogant style that the high-ranking Yankee military officer has taken. Rosales del Toro said: We should not forget that Colin Powell is the representative of the military chiefs of the generation that suffers from the Vietnam syndrome, the young officers who for many years served in the war against that country and suffered a bitter defeat, as we all know.

Powell served as a captain and as a major in the Vietnam war during two periods. During each period, he was wounded and almost died. The first period was from December 1962 until November 1963, when he served as an adviser to South Vietnamese infantry units. The second period was from June 1968 until July 1969 with the 11th Light Infantry Brigade of the 23d Infantry Division, American, [preceeding work in English] and with the 23d Infantry Division itself. Both units suffered considerable casualties. During the combat actions of 1969 alone, the 23d Infantry Division lost 7,100 men

including killed and wounded. Their current behavior, therefore, seeks revenge at all costs to raise the morale of the U.S. military forces.

The chief of the FAR General Staff commented that lately, high-ranking U.S. military officers have strengthened their language to convince U.S. public opinion that they will not repeat the mistakes of Vietnam. The truth is that since 1945, when they participated in a victory, thanks to the success of the Soviet Army, they have not won a war against a country that was prepared and committed to defending its independence. They could not achieve victory in Korea, where they lost 33,746 in combat, with 103,204 wounded. They suffered a humiliating defeat in Vietnam, where more than 57,000 were killed and 153,000 wounded. They have had to settle for attacking with their super power small, practically defenseless countries, such as Grenada and Panama or in the case of the Gulf War, in which they achieved a victory practically without having to fight.

As for Colin Powell's comment of our peoples' supposed fear in the face of the Yankee military threat, Rosales del Toro responded with a smile: In military affairs, arrogance and boasting have never been effective. I do not believe that he was referring to Cuba, because our people have given enough proof of their patriotism, integrity, and courage for more than 100 years. The officer corps, the regular troops and reserves, and most of our people have obtained sufficient combat training and experience in Cuba as well as in internationalist missions. Tightly united with our commander in chief, they are ready to act successfully in the defense of the socialist fatherland. We have a country to defend, a cause which we never will renounce, and a well-trained people. We are not anti-American or warlike. We do not threaten anyone. Everything we do is to avoid war. But if our enemy imposes it upon us, we will fight.

It is a shame that Colin Powell will not last long enough as chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to see the results of this war. One Christmas season would not be sufficient for the U.S. Armed Forces to reach its objectives, as in Panama and Iraq. The language currently being used by Powell is different from that used by his predecessors, and it reminds us of the language used by the ideological actors in power in the sixties, which makes us believe that this man is basing himself on his military position for future political ambitions.

In sum, as it says on a lighted billboard that was put up many years ago on the Havana seawall in front of the building occupied by the U.S. Interests Section: Mr. Imperialist, we have absolutely no fear of you.

More on Rosales Remarks

PA1002023692 Havana Radio Havana Cuba in Spanish 0007 GMT 8 Feb 92

[Text] Division General Ulises Rosales del Toro, chief of staff of the Cuban Revolutionary Armed Forces, has said in Havana that Cuba poses no threat to anyone and that it is neither anti-American nor warmongering. But he added that if the enemy forces Cuba to fight, Cuba will fight well.

With these remarks, published by GRANMA, the high-ranking Cuban officer responded to threatening remarks made 4 February by U.S. Geneneral Colin Powell, chairman of the U.S. Armed Forces Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Rejecting Gen. Powell's remarks, published by the magazine ARMY TIMES, Gen. Rosales pointed out: We have a country to defend, a cause we will never relinquish, and a prepared people.

Gen. Powell said the United States should frighten the world to preserve the order and stability this military power requires. After the allied victory over Iraq, Gen. Powell said only Fidel Castro and Kim Il-song remain to be defeated.

Gen. Rosales attributed Powell's remarks to vengeful feelings indicative of a need to cleanse the morale of the U.S. Armed Forces, which is affected by the Vietnam syndrome.

U.S. Bill for Blockade Continuation Viewed

PA1002042692 Havana Radio Havana Cuba in Spanish 1336 GMT 8 Feb 92

[Manuel Gonzalez Bello commentary]

[Text] A bill has just been introduced in the United States that shows a morbid interest in destroying Cuba.

Now that the 30th anniversary of the economic, commercial, and financial blockade that Washington has imposed on the island is approaching, Democrat Senator Robert Torricelli, backed by others, has introduced a proposal with the admitted purpose of strangling Cuba's economy. According to the proposal, any country giving Cuba preferential economic treatment will be banned from signing free trade agreements with Washington, will not receive any funds from President Bush's so-called Americas Initiative, and will not be benefited by write-offs of the debt it owes the United States.

If the proposal presented by Torricelli and his supporters is approved, any ship that docks at Cuban ports will not be permitted to enter U.S. ports. In addition, subsidiaries of U.S. corporations in third countries would be banned from exporting to Cuba.

It is very clear that the anti-Cuba proposal presented by the senators insists on involving third countries in the economic and commercial blockade against Cuba. This stand responds to the U.S. Government's arrogant and blackmailing policy in other countries, a policy that violates the standards that should govern the international community. The U.S. Government clearly attempts to defeat the Cuban people by starving them. The Torricelli proposal reinforces this idea. Curiously, such ideas appear in a nation that has been posing in Geneva as the signal defender of human rights.

For Washington to suspend the additional measures the proposal calls for, there will have to be sufficient democracy in Cuba, according to the proposal. It is not the Cuban people but President Bush, however, who will decide whether there is sufficient democracy on the island. Supposedly the defenders of democracy in the world do not regard such concepts as democratic. According to one article in the bill, the United States will send funds to help make nonviolent democratic changes in Cuba through nongovernmental organizations. For those familiar with the background of the U.S. Government actions, the bill evidently proposes to finance counterrevolutionary groups. The bill that U.S. legislators introduced on 5 February responds to two purposes: to destroy Cuba economically and isolate it politically.

Commentary Critical of U.S. Immigration Policies

PA0802145492 Havana Radio Havana Cuba in Spanish 1330 GMT 7 Feb 92

[Commentary read by Roberto Morejon]

[Text] One of those involved in the incidents at the Tarara Naval Base, which resulted in the death of three security guards and serious wounds inflicted on a fourth man, spotlighted the obstacles imposed by the United States on the normal flow of Cubans to that country to the north.

During the trial at the Havana Provincial Tribunal, citizen Pedro de la Rosa Guerra confessed that he was convinced that Washington would not grant him an entry permit, which was his desire, even though he met the requirements.

This individual and his brother, Enrique, had previously been sentenced to prison for an unsuccessful attempt to illegally leave the island.

On 9 January, Pedro de la Rosa Guerra, joined those who participated in the adventure at the Tarara Naval Base, on the outskirts of Havana, where he was accompanied by six other persons, many of whom had poor records of social conduct and lacked morals.

The criminals tried to steal a boat to attempt to flee to the United States. When they were unable to do so, they shot to death three security guard and wounded another. As a result of their participation in the incidents, the court sentenced two of them to death and the rest to prison terms of varying lengths.

Pedro de la Rosa Guerra, whose task was to steer the boat that was to be stolen by the group, is far from being the only one who has not received a positive response to his request to enter the United States.

The U.S. Interests Section in Havana indefinitely suspended the approval of requests from Cubans to visit the United States on a temporary basis. Thousands of former counterrevolutionary prisoners have waited for years for their visas to enter the United States, but they have never received a response, even though the Cuban authorities have approved their departure.

The objective of the White House is clear. It wants to create internal resistance to the revolution with this type of attitude. On the other hand, if frustrated travelers decide to leave the island illegally, then they are welcomed in Miami with joy and within a year they obtain refugee status.

The unsuccessful attempt to illegally leave the island by seven criminals last January has shown how far these criminals are willing to go to achieve their objectives obstructed by the U.S. Interests Section in Havana.

Jose Fernandez Begins Official Visit to Libya

FL0702133592 Havana Radio Progreso Network in Spanish 1200 GMT 7 Feb 92

[Text] Jose Ramon Fernandez, vice president of the Cuban Council of Ministers, began an official visit to Libya on 6 February with the aim of forging closer bilateral relations. He had previously visited Syria and Iran with similar aims, and in both countries he received expressions of support and solidarity with the Cuban Government and people because of the firmness with which they are facing the current adverse situation.

Latvia Signs Trade, Interbanking Agreements

FL0802022092 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 0000 GMT 8 Feb 92

[Text] Today, Cuba and Latvia signed a trade agreement for 1992 which paves the way for Cuba to supply Latvia with Cuban sugar. Cuba will receive food and other products in exchange. Both countries also signed an interbanking agreement in Riga, capital of Latvia. The parties analyzed the importance of the Latvian fleet in transporting citrus fruit from Havana to Latvia, a former member of the ex-Soviet Union. Foreign Trade Ministers Ricardo Cabrisas and Arijs Ziverts [title as heard] signed the agreements in a friendly atmosphere of complete understanding. The two men confirmed that there are many opportunities for the development of relations between Havana and Riga.

Roa on Third World, Latin American Foreign Debt

FL0702130092 Havana Tele Rebelde and Cuba Vision Networks in Spanish 0100 GMT 7 Feb 92

[Text] Today, Cuba denounced foreign debt as a new instrument of financial plunder and a new form of neocolonial dependence in the Third World. Raul Roa Kouri, the leader of the Cuban delegation to the 48th session of the UN Human Rights Commission, in an analysis of the subject: The Right of Peoples to Develop, reiterated the position of Cuban President Fidel Castro that the debt cannot be paid or collected.

Roa Kouri asserted that the countries of the South have already paid the debt many times over in the form of

payments for capital and interest or for profits and investments much greater in value than all the gold and silver extracted by colonial regimes from Latin America during four centuries. He pointed out that to sell debts that have already been paid, a plan that has been presented as something attractive, is nothing more than another ruse.

Carlos Lage Travels to Mexico for Official Visit

PA0702175592 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 0118 GMT 7 Feb 92

[Text] Havana, 6 Feb (NOTIMEX)—Carlos Lage, member of the Communist Party of Cuba [PCC] Politburo and creator of the new Cuban economic plans, traveled to Mexico on 6 February for meetings with Mexican officials, it was reported here by diplomatic sources.

Sources close to the Cuban Government consulted by NOTIMEX confirmed that the Communist leader was invited by Mexican Foreign Secretary Fernando Solana to discuss issues of interest to Mexico and Cuba.

Lage is considered the Communist leader closest to President Fidel Castro and is in charge of reorganizing the Cuban economy, which was disrupted by the collapse of the socialist bloc and the Soviet Union's disintegration.

He is also secretary of the Council of Ministers and was promoted to the PCC Politburo during the last congress in October 1991.

Lage, Roberto Robaina, and Carlos Aldana replaced historical figures such as Vilma Espin, married to Raul Castro; and current Culture Minister Armando Hart—among others—within the PCC leadership.

During a long interview published in January by the weekly JUVENTUD REBELDE, Lage asserted that Cuba is not implementing capitalist formulas to solve its internal crisis. "We are implementing socialist formulas in a capitalist world," he added.

He also rejected reports that Castro's government will resort to harsh economic measures to solve its economic limitations.

Lage, a pediatrician by profession and a former university and Communist youth leader, is responsible for the new strategy that seeks to mitigate the internal crisis and develop the economy, which was disrupted by the collapse of its traditional market.

During his interview with JUVENTUD REBELDE, Lage said that—despite the difficult economic situation and the increasing need to obtain foreign currency—his government will only accept offers which "are advantageous for the country and are in accordance with our principles."

He reasserted that state ownership will not be changed for private ownership; socialism will not be changed for capitalism; and a planned economy will not be changed for a market economy in Cuba. "Justice will not be changed for injustice," he added.

Mario Moya Palencia, Mexican ambassador to Cuba, will also travel to the Mexican capital to attend some of the meetings Lage will hold with Mexican Government officials, the sources said.

Lage's Comments Cited

PA0802134892 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 2047 GMT 7 Feb 92

[Text] Mexico City, 7 Feb (NOTIMEX)—Cuba only needs time to recover and overcome the difficulties that it is facing, Carlos Lage, member of the Communist Party of Cuba [PCC] and creator of the island's new economic policy, said here on 7 February.

The Cuban leaders led by Fidel Castro "will guarantee the standard of living of the population and their basic needs," stated Lage, who is also the executive secretary of the Council of Ministers, highest governmental organ on the island.

In addition, he ruled out the possibility of social disorder and indicated that he considers the single party system that exists in Cuba to be "more democratic" than the multi-party systems in other Latin American countries.

In an interview with a local television station, Lage stressed that in his country "no school has been closed, there are no sick people without medicine, there is no one without a job, and there is no critical poverty," despite the economic crisis that has worsened since last year.

Lage is considered the Communist leader closest to the decisions made by Castro and he is responsible for reorganizing the Cuban economy, which has been affected by the collapse of the socialist countries and the disintegration of the Soviet Union.

Lage was promoted to the Politburo of the PCC Central Committee at the PCC Congress held last October. Together with Carlos Aldana and Roberto Robaina, he represents the new generation of leaders on the island.

In his statements to a privately-owned Mexican television station, Lage explained that the departure of Cubans to the United States is a phenomenon common to all Latin American countries, given the higher U.S. economic development.

Mexican Foreign Secretary Fernando Solana invited Lage to discuss topics of bilateral interest. Recently, a top Mexican official ruled out that his country is planning to expand a commercial agreement with Cuba.

The Cuban official stated that social disorder in his country as a result of the economic crisis is unlikely, because the people are united to face the difficulties.

Currently, the consumption of fuel on the island has been reduced to less than half of what it was three years ago. In addition, the purchasing power of Cubans abroad has been reduced by 50 percent.

Concerning the measures implemented to save energy, Lage indicated that the government had anticipated the present situation.

After noting that to confront the lack of fuel, the government cut back television broadcasts, eliminated the use of air-conditioning units, and limited energy consumption in homes, offices, and public lighting, Lage stated: "We had anticipated a situation of blockade and threat."

Referring to the issue of a possible democratic opening and allowing the registration of other political parties and a free electoral system, Lage categorically rejected that the single-party system of Cuba allows for more citizen participation than the multi-party systems.

"We view democracy differently. We believe our idea of democracy is more democratic: There is only one party in Cuba, but the party does not make nominations. The people and the assembly make the nominations, and I believe that this is a much freer way of participating in the elections," he concluded.

Castro Sends Message to UNCTAD Leader

FL0802142892 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1028 GMT 8 Feb 92

[Text] Cuban President Fidel Castro has sent a letter to Kenneth Dadzie, secretary general of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development [UNCTAD]. In his letter, Castro underscored the opportunity that the eighth meeting of this organization will afford for profitable dialogue between countries with different levels of development, whose objectives are to contribute to the achievement of world peace and cooperation and to improve living conditions.

Consular, Trade Agreement Signed With Belize

FL0802024792 Havana Tele Rebelde and Cuba Vision Networks in Spanish 0100 GMT 8 Feb 92

[Text] Belize and Cuba have signed an agreement establishing consular and trade relations. Deputy Prime Minister Florencio Marin signed the document for Belize; and Carlos Rafael Rodriguez, vice president of the Council of State and Ministers, signed it for Cuba.

The visitor praised Cuba's progress in the sugar industry and expressed gratitude for the help rendered by Cuban doctors and teachers after Belize obtained its independence in 1981. The Belizean deputy prime minister, invited by Carlos Rafael Rodriguez, arrived last Saturday. During his stay in Cuba, which will end tomorrow, Florencio Marin visited sugar refineries and centers researching sugarcane derivatives.

Ambassador Reaffirms Cooperation With Angola

FL0802174692 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1000 GMT 8 Feb 92

[Text] Reinaldo (Cardiaques) [Lefferte], Cuban ambassador to Angola, has reiterated his country's position to continue its relations of cooperation with Angola. The head of the Cuban diplomatic mission in Angola made this statement at the conclusion of a meeting held at the Angolan Foreign Ministry with Angolan Deputy Foreign Minister Venancio de Moura. (Cardiaques) spoke to the National Radio of Angola reporters and said relations between Angolans and Cubans will never be destroyed.

The Cuban ambassador to Angola clarified his remarks by saying that thousands of Cubans had been to Angola and that thousands of Angolans have been to Cuba and are now professionals in various fields. He added that all these fields are indispensable for the reconstruction of Angola.

Reinaldo (Cardiaques) took advantage of the opportunity to exhort Third World countries to unite and become truly independent. The Cuban diplomat again condemned the unfair U.S. embargo imposed on Cuba.

Castro Comments on 'Very Tense' Fuel Situation

FL0802170392 Havana Tele Rebelde and Cuba Vision Networks in Spanish 0100 GMT 8 Feb 92

[Text] The commander in chief has commented on the tense situation relating to fuel and its by-products.

[Begin Castro recording] Right now the situation is tense because sometimes the reserves drop to 72 hours, but there are three, four, five days until a ship arrives. A delayed ship causes problems. The problem is very tense; it is the time of the year when we consume the most fuel.

We have wanted to avoid power outages, but I want you to know that in almost all of the provinces there are outages. The only province that does not have outages is Havana City. We have done everything possible to avoid outages because of all the trouble they create, but if public conservation does not improve we have no other alternative but to have outages. Power outages cause the most annoyance and they are the least necessary. If we really [word indistinct] because to do this we need everyone's cooperation.

Many people are conserving energy. They have reduced their consumption by half. Even those who have reduced their consumption to 150 [unit not specified], every time they can shut off a bulb, they should shut it off. Each time they can save, they should save. But what the country is doing with the allocated resources is a true heroic deed. It is incredible that you can still see hospitals in operation, the boys and girls in their schools, and their struggle in [words indistinct].

The revolution's problem is that there are too many programs in operation. I do not want to mention all of

them, but some areas have all their resources guaranteed so they do not stop. They are very important areas that generate an important income. But we continue to work and we still have some problems. Soon we will hold a meeting where (?we will discuss all this).

The people have made a great effort despite the pressure caused by the lack of fuel, lubricants, spare parts, tires, and so on. We could say.... [changes thought] Now, is everyone making the greatest effort possible? No, they are still not making the greatest effort possible. Since the people see that the country continues to go forth, they do not realize that the country operates on miracles and heroic deeds. And still, the mentality of the people is such that they ask for more resources. They say they need more resources; they need this or they need that. [end recording]

Reportage on Floods Caused by Tropical Storm

Civil Defense Reports

FL0702135292 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1000 GMT 7 Feb 92

[National Civil Defense General Staff Note No. 3, date and place not given]

[Text] As has been reported to the populace, since yesterday morning flooding of seawater has occurred in low-lying areas of the northern coast of Havana City, accompanied by strong winds. The most affected areas are along the Havana seawall from Paseo del Prado to 12th Street, as well as the low-lying areas of Santa Ana in Santa Fe, Playa Municipality, and from the Sierra Maestra Hotel in La Puntilla to 1st and 60th Streets, also in Playa Municipality.

It has been reported that the Havana Bay tunnel has been closed because of flooding in that area. Work is being done on that important artery of Havana City with pumps to remove the water. There is a similar situation at the 5th Avenue tunnel in Miramar.

Hundreds of people have been evacuated temporarily to safe places according to the plans, fulfilling in a disciplined way the instructions issued by the Defense Councils. No loss of human life has been reported. In view of possible damages to the Riviera, Presidente, and Deauvilae Hotels, the guests have been evacuated to other centers which offer greater protection in a situation such as this. Likewise, organizations, workplaces, and schools are consistently applying the measures set forth in their Civil Defense plans.

There have been 125 people evacuated from areas in Playa Guanabo to the teacher training school in Cojimar. Also, 46 people have been evacuated from the low-lying areas of Santa Ana in Santa Fe, Playa Municipality. No damages have been reported at Jose Marti Pioneers City. From the beginning, the Revolutionary Armed Forces and Ministry of the Interior, along with our people, have been participating in the work of evacuation, internal order, and traffic control in Havana City in accordance with the decisions made by the Defense Councils.

No flooding or damages have been reported in Pinar del Rio Province. The Matanzas Province General Staff has reported that the Civil Defense measures set forth for this situation have been put into effect. It has also been reported that since midday yesterday there has been slight flooding in areas around Boca Camarioca, the Oasis Hotel, and Rincon Frances in Varadero Municipality.

We repeat to all the residents of areas affected by seawater flooding that they should strictly comply with the instructions issued by the authorities and with other previously issued guidance.

Castro Assesses Damage

FL0702152592 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1000 GMT 7 Feb 92

[Passages within quotation marks are recorded]

[Text] Around midnight, in the predawn hours, Commander in Chief Fidel Castro visited the command post installed at the municipal offices of the Communist Party of Cuba [PCC] in Revolution Square at Linea and C Streets, where he met with PCC First Secretary Jorge Lezcano and Pedro Chavez, president of the Havana City Provincial Assembly of the People's Government. Brigadier General Lino Carreras, chief of the Havana City General Staff, was also present. Fidel spoke at length and gave his opinions about this storm. He spoke there for more than one hour, almost two hours. He referred to the causes that gave rise to this meteorological phenomenon.

[Unidentified speaker] "At that meeting I told them that, well, now they have to work, and after 0800 perhaps it will again start to ....."

[Castro, interrupting] "No, by then it will have moved away."

[Unidentified speaker] "Yes, yes. It has been moving away. We have to prepare ourselves for a rapid restoration, make a survey. There are always a lot of families who have.... [rephrases] Especially here, there are a lot of people who live in garages. Those garages are on the basement level, so everything is flooded. A lot of cars were trapped. The water rose very quickly. People went to bed, in spite of the fact that last night we warned them. Yes, last night we warned them."

[Castro] "There was not enough information about the rain in the morning. They told me at 1900 on Tuesday that a tropical storm was coming. I called the observatory. I was following that. At about 0100 on Tuesday, I asked what the situation was with the wind and the water. I was mostly concerned about agricultural things."

Fidel also spoke about when he heard about the storm and saw the heavy rain, he went around Havana Province in order to see how this phenomenon would affect the banana plantations and vegetable crops in Havana Province.

[Castro] "[Words indistinct] what the problem was like in the south, because if the rainstorm that fell in Havana also fell there it would have been something. And there were the winds. There were gusts of 60 or 70 [km per hour]. (?So much work had been done) on the crops, it would be crime if they were ruined by excessive rain and wind. In the afternoon I went around San Antonio. The military academy students were working picking vegetables. The students from the Humboldt School were also picking vegetables. The sun was out. There was hardly any wind. [Words indistinct] camp. They have about 240 mobilized workers. They were also working, picking, and harvesting.

"At 1600 it was drizzling from Guanabo to here. All the news was that really no damage had been done to agriculture. In Nueva Paz about 500 banana plants were ruined, but that is less than one hectare of banana plants. So that was saved. This storm passed over the southern United States and northern Havana Province. If it had come further south, with that amount of water and wind, the damage to agriculture would have been tremendous. This is a critical time. The potatoes and tomatoes are growing, everything is growing. There has been greater damage here with the flooding. The winds were stronger here on the northern coast. The rains were very heavy. In half of Havana Province, it did not rain."

The commander in chief really put a lot of emphasis on the crops in southern Havana Province. He said that fortunately the storm passed quite a ways away from Cuba, because if it had moved from 28 degrees north latitude to about 24 degrees, which is where Cuba is, it would really have caused a lot of destruction.

[Castro] "That is why the rain fell here. [words indistinct] in the central region, Cienfuegos, Villa Clara. There were strong winds. This morning they had strong winds in the central region. This morning the low pressure system came. I do not think that a clear explanation has been given yet of this phenomenon. [Name indistinct] tells me yes, that they explained. It was normal. But at least the information they gave us said that it was connected with the El Nino current. When this current occurs, it causes abnormal weather. The water warms up; the cold water goes deeper. It affects fishing, it affects everything, and it affects enormous areas. I saw a cable that.... [rephrases] For about a month they had been saying here that this year we would have this kind of phenomenon. They predicted it at the Academy of Sciences and associated it with the El Nino current.

"They said there was a similar situation in 1982 and 1983, and that these phenomena were going to occur. For more than a month they have been talking about it. It is bad luck that this year we would have this, for the sugar harvest as well as for these crops. It is a real winter hurricane. The ocean, as they said last night, had already risen. They say that in 1983 it happened twice. After three weeks it happened again. But here each week that is gained with the crops in the south is worth more than you can say. The potatoes plants are now producing potatoes. Everything is growing. Right now all this rain and wind could have done a lot of damage in southern Havana Province."

[Text] You know that according to the specialists and scientists, this meteorological phenomenon is apparently caused by the famous El Nino current. So when the commander in chief appeared, he said that some scientists from the Meteorology Institute had informed him that some predictions made in Europe said that this phenomenon would occur again in the next few days.

[Castro] "Tonight at the observatory they told me that, well, in Europe they were announcing another low pressure system for Tuesday. It would be a lighter one. I think it is too early to be informing people about it. Today is Thursday. This was associated with a cold front from the north. That is why it has been cool."

[Unidentified speaker] "Yes, it has been cool. [Words indistinct]"

[Castro] "But these phenomena are quite strange. Last year we had temperatures 2.5 degrees higher, so (?less) damage was done to the crops. But this year the climate has been very good. But these phenomena are becoming more frequent. It would be a catastrophe if it [words indistinct]."

[Unidentified speaker] "[Words indistinct]"

[Castro] "They told me they were 400 meters [words indistinct]."

Castro Inspects Areas

PA0702175492 Havana Radio Havana Cuba in Spanish 1330 GMT 7 Feb 92

[Text] President Fidel Castro has inspected flooded areas in Havana. He also went to the municipal Defense Council command post located in the Revolution Square to receive precise information on the persons who had been evacuated and on possible victims in the area.

The sea waters also reached the municipalities of Playa, Centro Habana, and Habana del Este. According to reports made to GRANMA newspaper; houses, schools, recreation centers, and work places are flooded. Thanks to the efficient mobilization carried out by the provincial and municipal Defense Councils, the dwellers affected by the flood were evacuated on time. Up until now, no fatal victims have been reported.

Castro Criticizes Media

FL0702215792 Havana Radio Progreso Network in Spanish 1200 GMT 7 Feb 92

[Text] Commander in Chief Fidel Castro visited the Civil Defense General Staff command post in Vedado this morning and held a lengthy talk with members of the provincial Defense Council headed by Comrade Jorge Lezcano, who is a Politburo member; with Comrade Pedro Chavez, president of the Havana City Provincial Assembly of the People's Government, and other officials who were here in the early morning hours. They have not left this place or the affected areas in Havana City for the past few hours. Comrade Fidel explicitly criticized the Cuban media for the way they had handled reportage of the weather situation that arose a little more than 48 hours ago. Here is an excerpt of his remarks here, I repeat, at the provincial Civil Defense command post in Havana City this morning with party and government officials in the capital. Let us listen.

[Begin recording] [Castro] I am talking about, and I am criticizing, the fact that it was not reported that there was an unfavorable weather situation. It was raining hard here on Wednesday morning. I am not talking anymore about flooding, I am talking about mini-floodings, such as what is happening on 5th Avenue, where when it rains, when there is a heavy rainstorm, some cars always get stuck. But warnings were given about this one, today. Yesterday, I was protesting from early in the day that not enough information was being given, I had been calling the observatory, calling everyone. Yesterday, quite a lot of warnings were given. Now, it may be as you say. I have not seen every report, but if it is not explained on television, which is what is watched the most.

[Unidentified speaker] On the eight o'clock newscast it was explained that there was going to be sea penetration....

[Castro, interrupting] Because they cannot [word indistinct] 100 percent, but what they warned of has occurred. What they said regarding the sea happened. They said it well, enough. How many bicycles ended up underneath the water?

[Unidentified speaker] No, the bicycles were...[changes thought] we have not seen any around. [Words indistinct] what we have seen is a lot of cars all over the place. Just now there was a mark around there.

[Castro] This is a social sector that has more cars than....

[Unidentified speaker, interrupting] Because there are hundreds, not just four dozen, and the owners did not move them. They must have their reasons.

[Castro] Yesterday a warning was given.

[Unidentified speaker] Also important, is that the (?RTR) of the FAR [Revolutionary Armed Forces] is going around distributing food in all the buildings, building by building, block by block, and the comrades from the People's Councils, and calling the presidents of the Committees for the Defense of the Revolution, and distributing it that way, so that all the residents there have food.

[Castro] Now, I think that the "Doing Radio" program did not warn of this weather phenomenon. [end recording]

Crops Damage Reported

FL0802193092 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1800 GMT 8 Feb 92

[Text] Strong gusts of wind, of up to 85 km per hour, that hit Villa Clara as a result of the tropical depression caused the leveling of more than 160,000 banana plants. According to Carlos Esquivel, provincial agricultural delegate, approximately 60,000 to 70,000 banana plants were leveled at the Quemado de Guines mixed crops enterprise, a pioneer of the micro-jet irrigation system in Cuba. Approximately 45,000 of the burrocensa variety in Baez were leveled and some 12,000 in Remedios. The mixed crop enterprise of (Liabu), located in the surrounding areas of Villa Clara, was also affected. Approximately 50,000 banana plants were leveled there.

Workers from the different mixed crops enterprises immediately went to the fields to collect the produce and prevent losses. In the cooperative and peasant sector, where plantations are scattered throughout the province—in other words, they are not vast—no considerable losses were reported.

State of Alert Declared

PA1002014292 Havana Radio Havana Cuba in Spanish 0000 GMT 10 Feb 92

[Text] The Civil Defense General Staff decreed on 9 February a state of alert in Cuba's central provinces, given the problems that may arise in that area as a result of the floods and high river levels caused by heavy rains and strong winds in the central part of the country.

The Civil Defense command post reported that the Provinces of Matanzas, Villa Clara, Cienfuegos, Sancti Spiritus, Ciego de Avila, and Camaguey are the most affected by the heavy winds that began early on the morning of 8 February. A large area of the northern coastal area in Havana was flooded by the sea earlier this week. The heavy rains and strong winds damaged houses and several tourist and construction facilities.

Commentary on Proliferation of Aggressive Actions

PA0702155992 Havana Radio Havana Cuba in Spanish 1330 GMT 6 Feb 92

[Roberto Morejon commentary]

[Text] The ongoing trial of the citizens involved in a recent piracy and murder act in the outskirts of Havana

is being monitored closely by Cubans, who support the application of the full force of the law on the authors and accomplices.

The defendants tried to seize a vessel to travel to the United States. To achieve this they used a very violent method, murder of three security guards.

This criminal action is not unrelated to counterrevolutionary actions promoted from the United States by the Cuban right wing based there and by the authorities of that country. Let us not forget that the nation to the North welcomes with jubilation aircraft hijackers and other individuals with long criminal records.

In Cuba, there are dangerous antisocial elements working with representatives of the counterrevolution who are trying to hide behind their role of human rights defenders. The enemies of the Cuban revolution are working on what certain leaders on the island have defined correctly as weak segments of society susceptible to certain influences and pressure. These law violators can openly use violence, as was the case at the Tarara Naval Base.

Cubans realize this reality and are aware of the danger threatening society should actions as aggressive as this one, which are unusual in Cuba, proliferate.

At a time when most Cubans are tenaciously facing the rigor of the special period during peacetime and struggling to ease shortages with the fruit of their daily work, there is no place for individual behavior outside the frame of constructive actions, and much less when the youths tasked with safeguarding the general public's property are murdered.

Ministry of Agriculture To Emulsify Fuel

FL0702180292 Havana Radio Reloj Network in Spanish 1504 GMT 7 Feb 92

[Text] The Ministry of Agriculture is preparing the conditions at its production centers to emulsify with water all the fuel they use by means of small plants located in appropriate places. Emulsion will make it possible to conserve up to 8 percent of the oil in a year in which the ministry must carry out its production with half the fuel it normally used at other times. Percy Ruiz, director of mechanization at the Ministry of Agriculture, said the filters on tractors will be replaced by similar metallic ones supplied by the Metallurgical Research Center, and the fuel pumps are being collected from the equipment, according to a report in today's GRANMA. Engineer Ruiz said that the movement for the (?Copete) emblem in more than 300 enterprises is being promoted. This involves every center in taking measures to promote the rational use, monitoring, and proper storage of fuels and lubricants.

Inter-Caribbean Affairs

Latin America Seeks Integration With Caricom

FL0802013392 Bridgetown CANA in English 1917 GMT 6 Feb 92

[By Paget de Freitas]

[Text] Kingston, Jamaica, Feb 6, CANA—Costa Rica, [passage indistinct]-speaking Caribbean, has told Jamaica that it will apply for observer status in the Caribbean Community and common market (Caricom).

Costa Rica's Caribbean ambitions were relayed to Jamaica's foreign minister, David Coore, by his Costa Rican counterpart, Bernd Niehaus, during an official three-day visit this week by Coore to San Jose. The February 3-5 visit was not previously announced here but a joint communique was released by the Jamaican Foreign Ministry late Thursday.

"The Costa Rican minister informed the Jamaican minister about the decision of his government to obtain observer status in the Caribbean Community as a further indication of his country's wish to (have) unbreakable links with the English-speaking Caribbean countries," the communique said.

The Jamaican prime minister, Michael Manley, is expected to formally inform his Caricom colleagues about Costa Rica's intention, if San Jose by that time has not yet sent an official application, when Caricom leaders meet in Jamaica for their intercessional conference on February 19.

Caricom is a 13-member trade and functional cooperation grouping of present and former British colonies in the Caribbean. It has granted observer status on some of its committees to non-English speaking countries. Up to now, however, it has kept a discreet distance between itself and Latin American aspirants for membership, preferring, it said, to deepen before it widens. The Dominican Republic and Venezuela have sought full membership, Cuba has said it would like some kind of form [passage indistinct]

International events, including the development of regional trade blocs and U.S. President George Bush's Enterprise for the Americas Initiative (EAI), are causing a re-assessment by Caricom of its relationship with its hemispheric neighbours as part of the mandate of a high-level group, led by former Commonwealth secretary general, Shridath Ramphal, looking at the future of Caribbean integration.

Caricom and Latin America have recently been making the first tentative move to deepen relations and Jamaica was a year ago appointed to represent the community's position in a number of hemispheric bodies such as the Rio Group. Last month Caricom and Central American foreign ministers met in Honduras to discuss a range of

issues, including the marketing of bananas, and ministers and technical officials from banana producing countries in Latin America and the Caribbean are to meet in Costa Rica from March 11 to 14 to follow up the marketing question.

Caribbean countries enjoy protected markets for their banana exports in the European Community and wish to maintain these when the EC implements its single market. Latin American countries want to be able to have the markets on the same terms as the Caribbean. Coore and Niehaus agreed that the talks held at the meetings so far, and the plans were "constructive" developments.

The Colombian meeting at the foreign ministers level constituted "clear indication of the solidarity between both regions and of the desire of Central American and Caribbean states to promote (a) real process of cooperation in the political, economic, and cultural fields."

Antigua and Barbuda

Economic Minister on 1-Week Visit to Saudi Arabia

FL0702165692 Bridgetown CANA in English 1555 GMT 7 Feb 92

[Text] St. John's, Antigua, Feb 7, CANA—Antigua and Barbuda's minister of economic development, industry, and tourism, Dr. Rodney Williams, is representing Prime Minister Vere Bird Senior on a visit to Saudi Arabia, a government statement said Friday.

King Fahd of Saudi Arabia "extended an invitation to the prime minister of Antigua and Barbuda to visit his country with a view towards exploring various ways in which Saudi Arabia could be of assistance to Antigua and Barbuda," according to the statement. Williams will be accompanied by Ambassador Ramez Hadid.

The statement said the Antiguan delegation was expected to seek financial and other assistance from the Saudis for infrastructural programmes. The visit will last one week.

Dominican Republic

* National Budget of 13.08 Billion Pesos Approved

92CA0075A Santo Domingo LISTIN DIARIO in Spanish 24 Dec 91 pp 1, 14

[Article by Geraldino Gonzalez]

[Text] The National Development Council (CND), headed by President Joaquin Balaguer, yesterday approved the Public Revenues and Expenditures Budget for the coming year, for the amount of 13,080,267,690 pesos.

The budget was approved in a session at one of the halls of the National Palace, where Budget Director Lawyer Guillermo Quinones Hernandez said that it was formulated in accordance with the policy of austerity and domestic savings that the government is carrying out.

The approval allocates 6.7875 billion pesos to current expenditures, which is equivalent to 52 percent of the total, while capital expenditures are budgeted at 6.2928 billion, equivalent to 48 percent.

The most significant parts of the budget correspond to payments on the public debt, at 2.5261 billion pesos, and energy at 1.290 billion pesos.

Also in the budget, 1.2443 billion pesos are allocated to the irrigation sector, 1.2013 billion to education, 1.6929 billion to health, and 633.1 million to agriculture and cattle-raising.

The budget law approved yesterday allocates 2.7177 billion pesos to the Secretariat for the Presidency, and 716.3 million to the Secretariat for the Interior and the Police.

It also assigns 826.1 million pesos to the Secretariat of the Armed forces; 83.9 million to the Secretariat of Foreign Affairs and 4.053 billion to the Secretariat of Finance.

The law approved by the National Development Council in a session lasting more than an hour also assigns 50.1 million pesos to the Secretariat for Sports, and 563.3 million to the Secretariat of Public Works.

It also assigns 23.9 million to the Secretariat of Industry and Commerce, and 29.5 million to the Secretariat of Tourism, while the Attorney General of the Republic is assigned 57.3 million.

The budget allocates 29.2 million to the Central Electoral Board, and 4.4 million to the Chamber of Accounts.

The National Congress was assigned 57.5 million pesos; civil and military pensions 217.8 million; the city councils 200.9 million, and the Autonomous University of Santo Domingo, 105.8 million.

73.3 million pesos were also granted as subsidies for private universities; 65.5 million to the Dominican Agrarian Institute for current expenditures, and 44.2 million to the National Institute of Water Resources (INDRHI), for the same purpose.

During the course of the session in which the budget law was approved, Lawyer Luis Toral Corbova spoke, observing that the commitments made with the International Monetary Fund had not been included in the budget.

Foreign Affairs Secretary Lawyer Juan Aristides Taveras Guzman also spoke, saying that the country had also not set aside funds to pay overdue debts to international organizations.

* Pena States Budget Underestimates Revenues

92CA0075B Santo Domingo EL SIGLO in Spanish 25 Dec 91 p 1

[Article by Jose Miguel Carrion]

[Excerpt] Dominican Revolutionary Party President Dr. Jose Francisco Pena Gomez yesterday stated that the 1992 Budget Law for Revenues and Expenditures underestimates the internal revenues the government will receive over the next year, by 22 percent. And he said that this financial underestimate will permit President Joaquin Balaguer to manage significant resources outside of all control.

Pena Gomez emphasized that the Budget Law reflects the small size of the Dominican economy, stated that the process of de-institutionalizing the country is continuing, and opined that it is necessary to cut the president's powers, in order for the budget surpluses not to be managed capriciously.

He stated that the law does not include government revenues originating from consulates, tourist cards, sales of tickets for trips out of the country, and the Falconbridge funds, nor the funds that could result from the sale of the gold from the sulphur mines in their transitional phase.

He refuted statements by President Joaquin Balaguer and the National Budget Office Director that the 1992 budget breaks with previous policy and that it dedicates special attention to education, health, agriculture and cattle-raising, and energy. He stated that in the current budget, the exact opposite occurs.

He said that in next year's budget the subtotals for those areas are lower than the percentages assigned to them by the governments of former presidents Antonio Guzman and Dr. Salvador Jorge Blanco. [passage omitted.]

* Sep Revenues Total 798.4 Million Pesos

92CA0075C Santo Domingo EL SIGLO in Spanish 12 Nov 91 (ECONOMICAS SECTION) p 1-D

[Article by Victor Manuel Tejada]

[Excerpt] With 798.4 million pesos in receipts for the month of September, government revenues in the first nine months of this year have increased to 7.239 billion pesos, indicating a nominal increase—that is, not counting inflation—of 52.9 percent compared to the same period in 1990.

In absolute terms, for the January-September period, the difference with the same period last year is of 2.273 billion pesos, primarily because of a considerable increase in collections from foreign trade and income taxes.

According to the monthly publications of the National Budget Office (Onapres), customs collections during the first months of 1992 surpassed by 1.0559 billion pesos—35.4 percent—those of the same period last year, increasing from 1.5239 billion to 2.2391 billion pesos.

That increase in customs collections occurred despite the fact that in the final quarter of last year customs rates declined significantly, and merchandise imports have recorded a considerable decline.

Nevertheless, while rates have declined, the exchange rate for calculating the taxes has increased, which has considerably increased customs collections.

The increase in income tax receipts has also been significant. From January to September of this year, the government received revenues of 2.2391 billion pesos from this tax, while for the same period in 1990 receipts totaled 1.5239 billion pesos. That means an increase of 31.9 percent (715.2 million pesos).

Although receipts have also increased from domestic revenues and other sources, they have not been as significant as in the case of the revenues corresponding to import taxes and income taxes.

On average, government revenues are upwards of 804.3 million pesos per month, leading to projections that by the end of the year receipts will almost total, or even surpass, 10 billion pesos, which would far surpass the government's projections for its 1991 budget, which was never approved by the Congress. [passage omitted.]

* Oct Revenues Total 866.2 Million Pesos

92CA0075D Santo Domingo EL CARIBE in Spanish 5 Dec 91 pp 1, 4

[Text] Government revenues rose to 866.2 million pesos last October, while domestic investment totaled 464.2 million.

Receipts last October were higher than in the month of September by some 68 million pesos. However, availability in September was 712,265 pesos, while in October it was 510,576 pesos.

Following is the text of the note from the National Budget Office (Onapres), which details the investments:

"The National Budget Office, in the interest of keeping the public informed as to the State's revenues and expenditures corresponding to the month of October 1991, hereby publishes the details it has accumulated with respect to the budget period.

"The strategy of the current government, presided over by His Excellency the President of the Republic, Dr. Joaquin Balaguer, is considering, in the allocation of public funds, essential priorities for the sectors of agriculture and cattle-raising, irrigation, potable water, energy, currency, health, and education, without neglecting other important aspects converging in the harmonious development of progress and the national economy.

"National revenues during the indicated period totaled 866,208,944.00 pesos, while nonforeign investment was on the order of 464,290,459.93 pesos.

"The sectors of agriculture and ranching, irrigation, and energy were given 178,379,673.16. In particular, the National Institute of Water Resources (INDRHI) received the sum of 70,088,091.86 for the construction and supervision of the Jiguey-Aguacate dams and the Sabaneta project, as well as for the construction of canals, and the repair and maintenance of other dams.

"Similarly, the Dominican Agrarian Institute (IAD) received 19,661,600.39 to carry out various projects, for the financing of various agricultural programs, while the Special Fund for Agricultural and Cattle-Raising Development (FEDA) received 1,440,191.19 pesos, to intensify programs to support agricultural production and other imminent objectives; the Cruz de Manzanillo project received 2,178,188.00 to plant diverse agricultural crops; and the Secretariat of State for Agriculture received 22,955,079.00 to promote and increase agricultural production.

"The National Institute for Potable Water and Sewers received the sum of 20.4 million pesos to carry out various works.

"The Central Bank of the Republic received 64.0 million pesos to pay the public debt. The Aqueduct and Sewage Corporation of Santo Domingo was granted 61.9 million pesos for the construction of the Valdesia-Santo Domingo aqueduct and other works.

"Finally, the Secretariat of State for Public Works and Communications received allocations totalling 142,509,669.38, the Office for Supervisory Engineers of the Works of the State received 40,200,732.61, and the Coordinating and Monitoring Office of the State Works received 5,750,000.00 for the execution of works and programs of social and economic interest throughout the Republic, whether in housing projects, airports and ports, free-trade zones and ports, free zones, aqueducts, sewage systems, highways and local roads, maintenance of streets and historic monuments."

* First 9 Months Exports Drop 4.3 Percent

92CA0075E Santo Domingo EL SIGLO (ECONOMIA SUPPLEMENT) in Spanish 13 Nov 01 p 1-D

[Article by Victor Manuel Tejada]

[Text] During the first seven months of this year domestic exports fell by $22.6 million (4.63 percent) compared to the same period in 1990, primarily due to declining sales of traditional and mineral products.

Contrary to what some government institutions claim, the decline in exports is not due primarily to the fall in prices; rather, the data shows a substantial reduction in export volumes, particularly in nontraditional and nonmineral products.

Both categories—traditional and mineral products—together represent 77.7 percent of domestic exports, meaning they have a preponderant weight in tabulating the sales of domestic goods in foreign countries.

Traditional export products are dominated by sugar and its derivatives, leaf tobacco, green coffee, and cacao bean. Among the minerals, for statistical purposes, iron ore, dore, bauxite, rough chalk, and limestone are considered.

The product registering the largest decline—comparing the January-July period this year with that of last year—was raw cacao bean, which fell 39.73 percent ($15 million). Leaf tobacco exports also fell significantly, declining by 37.23 percent ($3.8 million).

Contrary to what might be expected, exports of sugar and its derivatives have not declined much. Sales of those products fell by only 0.88 percent ($1.2 million). The same can also be said of iron ore, sales of which fell by 0.84 percent ($1.2 million).

Nevertheless, the case of dore is completely different. Exports of that mineral fell by 27 percent ($9 million), which is attributed to the depletion of the oxidized mineral and the fact that the sulphur exploitation project has not been initiated.

Nontraditional and FZ's: Two Points of Light

Contrary to what has occurred with traditional and mineral products, exports of nontraditional products and exports from the free trade zones have grown compared to the January-September 1990 period.

Although they only represent 22.3 percent of domestic exports, the increased sales of nontraditional products serves as a counterweight to the decline in the primary products the country markets overseas.

In effect, exports of nontraditional products grew by 11.7 percent ($10.9 million) during the period.

The category of nontraditional products includes agricultural and cattle-raising, agroindustrial, artisan and miscellaneous, and re-exports. The category that recorded the best results was agroindustrial products, with an increase of $5.6 million (18.7 percent).

With respect to the free trade zones, despite the recession in the United States—the primary market for these industries—which seems unending, this sector increased exports by $117.3 million (25.3 percent) over the first seven months of last year.

Although exports from free trade zones have increased their share to 55.5 percent of total Dominican Republic exports, their contribution to the economy cannot be measured in the same proportion, because not all money they generate enters the country.

Last year, for example, exports from free trade zones totalled more than $700 million, while funds deposited

with the Central Bank to cover salaries and local expenses were only slightly more than $200 million. There is no data on what quantity of dollars remains in the hands of Dominican businessmen as profits from the operation of many of the enterprises in those industrial parks.

* Power Outages Reportedly Continue Unabated

92CA0075F Santo Domingo EL NACIONAL in Spanish 19 Dec 91 p 6

[Article by Jose Maria Hernandez]

[Text] Blackouts continue to punish the population despite the fact that production from the national electricity system continues at 611,500 kilowatts.

In most zones around the capital energy is cut between eight and 10 hours per day, according to reports received over the last two days.

The sectors that depend on the Moscoso Puello hospital circuit generally wake up to electricity lasting until mid-morning, when the service is suspended until 1600.

From that time, electricity is maintained until early evening. Then it is suspended for a couple of hours.

The Dominican Electricity Company (CDE) claims that the blackouts are caused by malfunctioning transformers.

The CDE claims its production to be more than 600,000 kilowatts, a level that had not been generated for almost a year.

The increase was achieved through the reintegration into the system of the Itabo I and Haina IV power plants, which had been shut down for maintenance during the end of last week.

Also contributing to the increase is the additional production from Los Minas IV, which expanded from 55,000 to 60,000 kilowatts; Falconbridge, from 40,000 to 50,000; and Haina IV, from 60,000 to 70,000.

It is hoped that within a few hours Falconbridge will raise the CDE's kilowatts by 30,000 kilowatts.

Next week the situation could improve as a result of the decreased demand from the closing of numerous enterprises because of collective vacations.

The CDE is carrying out a campaign to maintain its deteriorated plants, to which it attributes the increased production by Haina IV and Itabo I.

The State service enterprise believes that when Haina II and Puerto Plata I return to operation, their energy support to the CDE will increase.

By the end of this month or the beginning of next year, the powerful Itabo II power plant is expected to be reintegrated into the system, after having been shut down for several months because of a malfunctioning rotor.

This costly equipment was imported recently from the United States and is being installed by technicians from General Electric and the CDE.

* CDH Accuses Government of Rights Violations

92CA0075G Santo Domingo EL SIGLO in Spanish 11 Dec 91 p 3

[Article by Miguel Reinoso Solis]

[Excerpts] The Human Rights Committee and the Dominican Section of the American Lawyers Association, have accused the government before international organizations of illegally detaining 28 prisoners who have been granted freedom by the courts, but who are being held by the National Police.

The complaint was formulated before the United Nations (UN) and the Organization of American States (OAS), and was received by their representatives in this country, Cesar Miquel and Fernando Cavada, respectively.

It was delivered by lawyers Manuel Medrano Vasquez, Ramon Urbaez Braszoban, Cesar A. Jazmin, Servando Hernandez Guillen, David Lopez Cornielle, Manuel Mercedes Medina, and Roberto Gaston, in the name of the prisoners, and it coincided with the commemoration of International Human Rights Day.

The lawyers demand freedom for those prisoners granted suspended sentences by the courts, but "insultingly mistreated" by the Police. In addition, the organizations bringing the complaint notified the Executive, Legislative and Judicial branches of their action.

The notifications were made to the office of Executive Branch Legal Counsel Pedro Romero Confesor; the National Congress, through the offices of the presidents of the Senate and the Assembly; and the Secretariat of the Supreme Cour. [passage omitted.]

The complaint is for supposed violations of the International Pact on Civil and Political Rights and the Interamerican Convention on Human Rights. [passage omitted.]

El Salvador

Cristiani Discusses Reconstruction, Aid

PA0902195592 San Salvador Radio Cadena YSKL in Spanish 1802 GMT 7 Feb 92

[News conference by President Alfredo Cristiani with foreign and local reporters and unidentified moderator, at the presidential residence in San Salvador—live, broadcast in progress]

[Text] [Cristiani].... The German minister has brought a message from the German Government and its parliament indicating that they are willing to cooperate in the nation's reconstruction, in compliance with the signed agreements, as well as the reconstruction plan itself. Nothing definite has been established. We will leave this for the ministers to determine in which program, in what amounts, and which mechanism would be used to receive the aid [words indistinct] Germany's willingness to help the nation.

What was the second question?

[Reporter] [Question indistinct]

[Cristiani] We have sent a personal letter to President Bush requesting that he extend the program so that the Salvadoran [refugees] can legally remain in the United States. We believe that this request was well received during [Secretary of State James] Baker's visit. We know that in Congress there are congressmen who are in favor of extending... [pauses] We are requesting at this level [congressional level], time and space so that the possible return of our fellow citizens can be carried out in an orderly fashion, not suddenly, as this would cause more upheaval in times such as these.

[Moderator] [Words indistinct] from DPA

[Reporter] I would like to go back to [words indistinct]. Do you have an approximate number on the land takeovers since the signing of the peace agreements in New York on 31 December? I would also like to ask you if you agree with the statements by the FMLN [Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front] concerning the weapons they hold. They have stated that they have 6,800 men and 4,000 weapons. There appears to be a contradiction here. It is difficult to imagine a rebel without a weapon.

[Cristiani] I am going to start with the last question. I do not have the official report they presented. Nevertheless, considering the numbers cited here, the number of rebels given appears to be within the estimates made, maybe a bit high, but acceptable. Clearly, the statement that there are more rebels than weapons is outrightly false. We have always known that there are more weapons than men. This was made very obvious during the November 1989 offensive when they transported additional truckloads of weapons, because, according to them, the people were going to take up arms. Therefore, it is impossible for them to now claim that there are fewer weapons than men. If this is the case, we cannot accept it and we will proceed to ask Copaz [National Commission for the Consolidation of Peace] to request that the FMLN give true numbers. I can only repeat that up to now, I do not have the report from our commission that is participating in the termination of the armed conflict and I would have to wait to receive an official report to offer a reply based on the numbers given.

What was the first question?

[Reporter] The first question was: Do you have any idea how many land occupations have taken place since January.

[Cristiani] I do not have figures from January to present, but about 220 since 3 June 1991; 267 properties have been occupied since 3 July.

[Reporter] Have occupations since 3 July been subjected to evictions?

[Cristiani] Some yes. Lately, we have preferred to avoid confrontation, because, as you know, there was an incident in which a soldier and a civilian were injured. We want to resolve this by other means while avoiding confrontation. We do not want to start with drastic measures, but we will adopt drastic measures should the FMLN not contribute toward averting this problem, which is a very serious one at this moment.

[Moderator] Mr. Emilio Crespo of ACAN-EFE.

[Crespo] A couple of questions, Mr. President. First, Venezuela, which has had a great democratic tradition, has just suffered a military uprising. I would like to know what possibilities or danger there is of a similar occurrence in El Salvador over the short term. Second, the FMLN has criticized the reconstruction plan that the government is implementing and has requested the drafting of a new one by consensus. Will the president of the Republic agree to this request?

[Cristiani] I do not believe the conditions exist for a coup d'etat in El Salvador. I do not think that our country could face the situation that Venezuela did. The government is committed to presenting a reconstruction plan to the FMLN and welcomes its recommendations, and takes them into account. We must well understand that the national reconstruction plan is a government plan that is not part of the agreements. Thus, the government will implement it.

We have already received the recommendations of other segments of the population that have held seminars around the country. We have incorporated sensible recommendations from political, labor, and business sectors, and from social organizations, and the Armed Forces themselves. We are willing to do the same with FMLN recommendations. The reconstruction plan has been virtually placed at the disposal of many segments of the population. If you will, the government has welcomed support and contributions.

The FMLN is requesting virtually institutional participation in the development of the reconstruction plan and this is not part of the agreements. They did request this during the negotiations, but I want you to know that the UN representative advised the FMLN that it was ridiculous to virtually request a co-government to develop a reconstruction plan, because no government would accept this from an armed group such as the FMLN.

The agreement calls on us to simply present a reconstruction plan to them, welcome their recommendations, and take them into account. We will fulfill the agreements under such terms. The plan will be developed by the government. It is not a plan to favor the FMLN or any other specific sector. It seeks to ease the situation in the areas most affected by the conflict and it involves different political parties and social organizations. It is a government plan.

[Moderator] Nery Mabel Reyes of Radio Cadena YSKL.

[Reyes] Mr. President, still with regard to the national reconstruction plan. This has caused many [word indistinct] problems in the past and now that the international community is ready to grant us aid, has the government thought about mechanisms to guarantee that these funds are well managed? My second question is about the deportation of [words indistinct]. Do you not believe that a personal visit to meet President Bush more advisable?

[Cristiani] I believe that each government deserves the labels it has received. Previous administrations handled funds from abroad dishonestly, but so far no country or international agency has accused the current government of embezzlement. This is so mainly because we have conducted special audits of each program to ensure that funds are handled in the most honest way possible. The reconstruction plan also includes audits to guarantee that funds are used in an honest and effective manner. We have always been open to special audits. We have nothing to hide. Our aim is to spend funds for the purposes for which they were targeted.

As for your second question, I believe that it is logical that talks at a personal level can be more effective at times. This problem is not being addressed now. During our June 1991 visit we told President Bush that we could see a problem coming should peace be achieved, that a large number of Salvadorans could be forced to return in a disorderly fashion. This is not a new issue. Obviously, should the president invite me to visit, I would gladly discuss the issue again, because it is an important one.

Nevertheless, we have made efforts. Our embassy is also working to ensure that the broadening of rights for Salvadorans will also be enjoyed there [in the United States]; that their return not take place in a disorderly fashion.

[Moderator] Luis Campos Gonzalez of DIARIO LATINO.

[Campos] Mr. President, as commander in chief of the Armed Forces, how do you interpret the statements of former Captain Francisco Mena Sandoval that the hierarchy of the military institution is bad? He specifically pointed out Generals Ponce and Vargas, saying that these officers should leave their posts?

[Cristiani] Each person has his own opinions. Mena Sandoval is entitled to his. However, the president of the Republic is the one who appoints state officials and he chooses whomever he pleases.

Cristiani Discounts Coup Possibilities

PA0702152792 San Salvador Canal Doce Television in Spanish 0300 GMT 7 Feb 92

[Text] After condemning the 4 February coup attempt in Venezuela, President Alfredo Cristiani said such an attack cannot take place in El Salvador because the majority decidedly supports democracy.

[Begin Cristiani recording] We believe our countries are marching toward democracy; no minority can take from the people their right to choose their leaders. [end recording]

Any attack on democracy must be condemned from all points of view, President Cristiani said this afternoon when commenting on the uprising by Venezuelan officers who tried to carry out a coup d'etat in that South American nation. Our country is not outside this possibility, but such possibilities are remote when the majority of the people favor democracy.

[Begin recording] [Unidentified reporter] We have seen how a solid democracy such as Venezuela has had this sort of problem. Our country is not free from the possibility of some military persons not agreeing with changes being carried out by the government.

[Cristiani] That is true for all countries. In all countries there are groups—minorities—that try to interrupt democratic processes, believing they are right about everything, when it is the people, as a whole, who are best qualified to think and to reach their own decisions. [end recording]

Regarding illegal land seizures, Cristiani said this cannot be tolerated, because it violates the spirit of the agreement signed by the government and the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front [FMLN].

[Begin Cristiani recording] Many of the people doing that are agitators who are following FMLN guidelines that call for seizing the land and then having it forcefully included as part of the agreements. We have said the government is not prepared to include illegal land seizures in the agreements. The spirit of the agreements is completely different, and those who have participated in illegal seizures of land will not be considered as beneficiaries of the land transfer program. [end recording]

President Cristiani emphatically cautioned that this type of action disturbs the efforts being carried out within the framework of the December 1991 agreement the government and the FMLN signed in New York City.

Peace Implementation Delayed by Disagreements

PA1002034192 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1433 GMT 9 Feb 92

[Report by Emilio Crespo]

[Text] San Salvador, 9 Feb (ACAN-EFE)—The implementation of the peace agreements in El Salvador was delayed for the first time on 8 to 9 February, when the government and guerrillas seriously disagreed over the land ownership issue.

The National Commission for the Consolidation of Peace (Copaz), in charge of implementing the pledges signed in Mexico on 16 January, was unable to form, by the established deadline, the subcommission that will organize the new Civilian National Police (PNC), or resolve the land occupation problem.

Copaz failed to present lists of candidates for the position of PNC director and for its Academic Council, which should have been submitted on 8 February for President Alfredo Cristiani's final approval.

Until now the peace agreements between the government and guerrillas had been promptly implemented, including the separation of forces, the first phase of which ended on 6 February with the incident-free gathering of the Army at 100 garrisons and the guerrillas at 50 camps.

Copaz President Mario Aguinada told ACAN-EFE that the work of his organization, the executor and arbiter of the peace agreements, "is going slowly." He accused the government representatives of "being somewhat inclined to attempt to renegotiate" matters that have already been defined in the Mexico agreements.

Aguinada, a member of the leftwing National Democratic Union (UDN), described the negotiations to form the subcommission that will examine the land problem as "difficult." He guardedly accused the government of delaying this matter.

This subcommission will inventory the properties, farms, and real estate occupied by peasants and guerrillas and establish ways to resolve their situation by having the state expropriate or purchase these properties from their owners.

As long as that subcommission is not ready, "critical situations may emerge with regard to certain land-related matters," said Aguinada, who blamed the delays in Copaz activities on the "clogging" of this issue.

President Cristiani on 7 February accused the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) of promoting the occupation of farms, despite the peace agreements. He said that since 3 July, when those actions should have been frozen, 220 properties have been invaded.

Joaquin Villalobos, one of the five members of the FMLN "General Command," denied those charges on 8 February, saying that on the contrary it is the eviction of peasants that is threatening to create a "dangerous" situation.

Villalobos has been appointed to the Copaz subcommission to organize the PNC, along with four political party delegates. On 10 February delegates from the government, rightwing National Conciliation Party, and Christian Democratic Party will be appointed.

Aguinada said that in addition to Villalobos, the commission is comprised of businessman Juan Jose Domenech, Oscar Fernandez of the ruling Nationalist Republican Alliance (ARENA), Oscar Fernandez of the Authentic Christian Movement (MAC), Sigfrido Reyes of the UDN, and Oscar Fernandez of the leftwing Democratic Convergence.

This subcommission will organize the creation of the new police force that is to replace El Salvador's current security bodies.

The new police will be open to all Salvadorans, although it is expected that its members will be former guerrilla fighters who pass the admission tests and former members of the current force that will be dissolved.

The UN Observers for El Salvador (ONUSAL), which has a contingent of over 300 soldiers, will have another group of 470 policemen observe the transition between the former police forces and the PNC.

These ONUSAL agents, mostly Spaniards and Mexicans, will supervise the actions of both police forces, conduct their own patrols, and hear complaints.

Relocation of Forces Said on Schedule

PA1002044792 (Clandestine) Radio Farabundo Marti in Spanish to El Salvador 0000 GMT 7 Feb 92

[Interview with Commander Hector Martinez, member of the National Army for Democracy, END, General Command, with unidentified reporter in Chalatenango Department; date not given—recorded]

[Text] [Reporter] The first phase of the separation of forces in the two armies ends on 6 February. The Armed Forces troops are scheduled to gather in 100 positions and Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front [FMLN] forces are scheduled to gather in 50 positions. According to the implementation schedule, the first phase of the separation of forces should occur on Delta plus five, meaning between 1 and 6 February. We have with us Commander Hector Martinez, member of the National Army for Democracy, END, General Command, in Chalatenango. He says the first phase of the separation of forces has been carried out without major

problems. Could you tell us what is the current situation of the garrisons in Chalatenango?

[Martinez] I would like to begin by explaining that all the forces were at their respective barracks in Chalatenango by 0600 on 5 February. We visited the barracks in Los Ranchos and saw Comrade Major Freddy [not further identified] in charge of those troops, which are currently engaged in recreational activities. A work group has been comprised with all our comrade fighters and their commanders. Many visits have been made by ONUSAL [UN Observers for El Salvador] to carry out the separation of forces and prevent any confrontation. The zone is located close to a corridor used by the Armed Forces. In fact, two companies came through from Cerron Grande to Chalatenango today. We received the information on time and there were no problems. The Army respected the zone where we are located. We have also visited the barracks in Dulce Nombre de Maria. The fighters are currently... [pauses] they look good, feel optimistic, and have confidence in all the work we are doing. We believe we have a lot to do. There is some concern because many points where the barracks are located have problems with supplies, particularly water. We must find the way to solve the situation.

[Reporter] How many... [pauses] well, if you can, please tell me where and how many positions the END has in Chalatenango in the first phase.

[Martinez] During the first phase we have two positions in western Chalatenango. One is in Obrajuelo, Dulce Nombre de Maria municipality, and another one in the area of La Reina, San Antonio. We also have another position in La Palma and another barracks in the area of Dulce Nombre de Maria—specifically in Sitios Arriba, Sitios Abajo, and Melara. We have another barracks in the area of Las Vueltas, plus another position in the area of Los Ranchos, Las Limas, Las Flores. The same goes for Nueva Trinidad. Those are the positions we have in this first phase. We will remain there and, after the first phase, meaning around the end of the month and early next month, we will move to the other positions we were assigned. All FMLN forces will eventually be installed in three barracks.

[Reporter] Commander, how many troops are currently quartered?

[Martinez] We currently have approximately 1,300 men, actually it is 1,500 men, here in Chalatenango.

[Reporter] How is the ONUSAL implementing its mechanisms? Are there any permanent personnel or do they simply visit the area?

[Martinez] There is an office in San Jose Las Flores and its officials maintain constant contact with the END commanders here in Chalatenango. They are also frequently visiting the barracks. They deal directly with our barracks commanders to follow developments in the barracks. We believe our relations with the ONUSAL members have been positive, until now. We believe that their attitude is very positive.

[Reporter] What about the Armed Forces' duties during the first phase? I specifically refer to the Chalatenango barracks. What reports do you have about their movements?

[Martinez] First of all, an Army phase ended on Delta plus six. It involved pulling back from certain positions—specifically in Potonico—that the Army troops had in this department. The Army battalion located there has to be mobilized and sent to the City of Chalatenango.

[Reporter] They have not left?

[Martinez] They have move between 7 and 8 February. They also have to pull out of El Encumbrado and Potrero Sula. This would leave only some minor positions; and they are scheduled to leave these during the second phase, when they will go to the 1st Military Detachment and the 4th Infantry Brigade.

[Reporter] Commander, can we say that the first phase has concluded without major problems?

[Martinez] We think the first phase has been implemented normally. There have been no problems. Things have been going along fine. We think our attitude... [pauses] we have abided by the agreements' specific guidelines and we have fulfilled all the agreements.

Copaz Members Hold First Meeting 5 Feb

PA0702143892 San Salvador EL MUNDO in Spanish 5 Feb 92 p 32

[Text] Four months after its 25 September 1991 creation, within the framework of the New York Agreements and several meetings in exile, particularly in Mexico, the National Commission for the Consolidation of Peace, Copaz, met for the first time in El Salvador on 5 February. The meeting took place on the sixth floor of the Legislative Assembly.

Copaz includes a representative from the government, one from the Armed Forces, two from the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front [FMLN], and one from each political party: Nationalist Republican Alliance [ARENA], Christian Democratic Party [PDC], Democratic Convergence, National Conciliation Party [PCN], Nationalist Democratic Union [UDN], and Authentic Christian Movement [MAC]. The archbishop of San Salvador and a representative from UN Observers for El Salvador [ONUSAL] also participated in the commission as observers.

The meetings were previously held in Mexico, because the government viewed the FMLN as a clandestine organization and Commanders Joaquin Villalobos and Francisco Jovel were not allowed to enter the country.

The other Copaz members: For the Armed Forces, General Mauricio Ernesto Vargas; for the FMLN, Commanders Joaquin Villalobos, Francisco Jovel, and Miguel Saenz Varela; for ARENA, Dr. Armando Calderon Sol and Dr. Jose Francisco Guerrero; for the PDC, Dr. Fidel Chavez Mena and Gerardo Le Chevalier; for the PCN, Ciro Cruz Zepeda, and Jose Rafael Machuca; for the Democratic Convergence, Dr. Ruben Zamora Rivas, Carlos Diaz Barrera, and Victor Manuel Valle; for the UDN, Mario Aguinada and Norma Guevara [Norma Fidelina Mayorga de Grande]; and for the MAC, Dr. Guillermo Antonio Guevara Lacayo and Pedro Alberto Hernandez.

The law on Copaz was approved on 30 January, and President Alfredo Cristiani swore-in the commission members on 1 February, the day the cease-fire was implemented, at Pavilion No. 1 of the International Fair. Copaz is in charge of supervising the compliance with all the agreements signed between the government and the FMLN, as a mechanism of control and participation of civilian society in the process of changes resulting from the negotiations, according to Article 1 of that law.

Article 21 says "Copaz will be dissolved after the agreements have been fully implemented. This will be determined by the commission through an agreement in which two-thirds of its members must vote.

Plan Civilian Police Subcommission

PA0802022692 San Salvador Canal Doce Television in Spanish 0300 GMT 7 Feb 92

[Text] The National Commission for the Consolidation of Peace, Copaz, agreed on the evening of 6 February to form an eight-member subcommission to supervise the mechanisms for creating the National Civil Police [PNC]. A second agreement was reached at the second Copaz session, again by consensus, concerning the form and number of persons who will comprise the PNC subcommission which, according to the agreements, should be operational now.

[Begin unidentified speaker recording] We have reached an agreement. The agreement is consistent and it states that the commission will be comprised of eight persons—one delegate from each of the groups comprising Copaz. It is understood that Copaz members are from the political parties, the FMLN [Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front], and the government. [end recording]

The provisional Copaz coordinator said many issues are still pending and meetings will probably continue after 7 February.

[Begin unidentified speaker recording] This actually involves a commission that will supervise the PNC's actions. It must be formed by politicians because that is the only way to guarantee that the new PNC is neutral, that it is not a partisan organization. If this is done differently, then we face the danger of having a partisan PNC. [end recording]

The political correlation formula may also be agreed on to appoint a special land subcommission, which must be formed during these meetings. According to statements, harmony and the search for consensus continue to prevail at the first official Copaz meeting. The meetings are being held behind closed doors and the media is allowed access to the premises only when the meetings are in recess.

Assembly to Interpret National Reconciliation Law

PA0802040892 San Salvador Canal Doce Television in Spanish 0300 GMT 7 Feb 92

[Report by Marco Antonio Guevara from the Legislative Assembly in San Salvador]

[Text] The Legislative Assembly agreed at its 6 February plenary session to interpret the amnesty decree with the intention of clarifying some technical issues. The Assembly agreed to condemn the coup d'etat planned against Venezuelan President Carlos Andres Perez.

The Assembly hastily approved, by unanimous decision, a decree in which the recently approved National Reconciliation Law, the Amnesty Law, is truly interpreted. The political decision was made during a 5 February Copaz [National Commission for the Consolidation of Peace] meeting to settle prevailing doubts on judicial issues, particularly among permanent Copaz observers.

[Begin recording, first unidentified speaker] The ambiguity detected in the law prevents a speedy process, so we have all requested a clarification. [end recording]

This interpretation is intended to clear the doubts that arose concerning the amnesty decree, particularly concerning the legal implications of future investigations carried out by the Truth Commission.

[Begin recording] [Second unidentified speaker] The law was undoubtedly presented at the last minute to the Legislative Assembly and it had to be quickly approved by the Legislative Assembly to implement the agreements and to abide by the terms specified in the agreements—so there was hardly any time to discuss it.

[First speaker] Once we learned about the Copaz members' doubts, we began to look for the best way to settle the issue. I believe a solution has been found. [end recording]

Likewise, the Legislative Assembly approved—unanimously and without the usual preliminaries—a declaration condemning the coup d'etat attempt in the Republic of Venezuela, above all for the planned assassination of President Carlos Andres Perez. The assembly's declaration states to the world its decision to

support the search for permanent democratic institutions in Latin America and, above all, its condemnation of any effort to assume control by force.

UN Observer on Peace Agreements Implementation

PA0802021692 San Salvador Radio Cadena YSKL in Spanish 1200 GMT 7 Feb 92

[Text] Spanish General Victor Juance, head of the UN military observers in El Salvador, has reported that the peace agreements signed between the Salvadoran Government and guerrillas are being fully implemented according to schedule and with the cooperation of both sides.

Since 1 February, when the cease-fire officially started, the 65,000 Army members and the nearly 10,000 combatants of the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front [FMLN] rallied in 100 quarters and 100 camps, respectively, as scheduled for the first stage in the separation of forces.

Sources of the UN Group for El Salvador [ONUSAL] in the central San Vicente Department, reported the only known incident, the death of two soldiers by an accidental explosion of a grenade.

The general said we are maintaining very good relations with Army and guerrilla troops; there has been close collaboration and we have had no difficulties, he added.

He said the mobilization of the two parties took place without problems. As of 6 February only a few FMLN groups had not reached the agreed upon sites, because of the lack of rural transportation.

A total of 332 ONUSAL military observers were deployed throughout the country over the past week to verify the separation of forces and the concentration process.

He said the observations, which were made exclusively to comply with the treaty, have met (?unreserved) approval. There has been an excellent rapport between Salvadorans and foreign officers, who are camping in small rural towns.

The general said most observers speak Spanish and many have some familiarity with Central America, due to their participation in previous missions of the UN Group for Central America, a contingent created in 1989 to demobilize the Nicaraguan contras and bring peace to the borders of the isthmus.

FMLN Leader Handal Interviewed on Peace Talks

Discusses Process

PA0602172792 Managua EL NUEVO DIARIO in Spanish 2 Feb 92 p 4

[Part I of interview with Jorge Shafik Handal, Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front General Command, by Tomas Borge, member of the Sandinist National Liberation Front National Directorate; place and date not given]

[Text] Jorge Shafik Handal would seem like a lot things, except a guerrilla. He would seem like a kind priest, a university professor, a stern judge, and an envoy who must act quickly. He is exactly that: a peace envoy in a country that is bigger than its geographic extension. He is the main character in a conflict where daring, the law of the jungle, and violence have joined to crush a ruthless structure.

He is 60 years old, which in no way limits an extraordinary capacity to work. He speaks with a strong and philosophical voice and uses compelling gestures. The most striking thing about him is that he instills trust and does not try to compete with his passionate fellow comrades of the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front [FMLN] General Command. There is such an obvious light flowing from his eyes that after a farewell embrace, one leaves with the conviction that not only is he a happy man, but he also looks like a happy man.

It is not by chance that he was chosen as head and spokesman of one of the most complex peace negotiations in the world, even though he is the general secretary of El Salvador's Communist Party. He is a communist at a time when communists are suspected not only of being totalitarian or of having sold out to Moscow's gold, but also of being obsolete and antihistorical

[Borge] What were the main objections made by the Salvadoran Government during the recently concluded peace negotiations?

[Handal] The most difficult issue, and the one we argued the most about, was the one related to the Armed Forces. It was a very sensitive issue, since from the start our position was that of a complete dissolution. In other words, the Armed Forces and the FMLN would have to dissapear concurrently. Unfortunately, this could not be done. Even though our proposal received wide support, the correlation of forces in El Salvador did not allow us to reach this goal. Then we began demanding radical reforms and left the door open for a future total demilitarization. The reforms we were able to obtain will be quite radical; they involve the purging of the Armed Forces. A mechanism has been devised to obtain this objective. An ad hoc commission has been established and its members have already been appointed. This commission is responsible for investigating each Armed Forces officer and making recommendations.

Another very difficult issue to overcome was the one dealing with the impunity of the military leaders who, despite their abuses and crimes, were never tried or punished in the past 60 years. We somehow had to overcome that issue. We were finally able to do it by creating the Truth Commission, which has already begun to function. The commission, which was appointed by the UN secretary general, will be formed by three trustworthy international persons. The reforms

also entail constitutional reforms, since the Constitution currently in effect in El Salvador empowers the Armed Forces with 14 mandates. In the future, these 14 mandates will be cut to only two: defense of national sovereignty and territorial integrity.

[Borge] Will there be changes in the military doctrine then?

[Handal] Yes. The Armed Forces were considered to be the guardians of the Constitution. They believed they were above the Constitution and had the right to decide when it should be amended, which they did on many occasions. The military doctrine currently in use has national security as its core. In other words, its enemies are all of the progressive and democratic forces in El Salvador, including the Catholic church. They murdered dozens of priests and even came to the point of killing Oscar Arnulfo Romero, the archbishop of San Salvador. In addition to replacing this doctrine with one more appropiate to its constitutional mission, the three security bodies must also be eliminated. These three police forces have ravaged our country, and they were under the control of the military. They will be replaced by a new National Police, which will be under the control of civilian authorities and will operate separately from the Armed Forces. The FMLN will be part of the new National Police.

[Borge] Will the two paramilitary groups also be abolished?

[Handal] Yes. One is the misnamed Civil Defense System, which at one time consisted of nearly 40,000 armed members. To be quite honest, they fought a lot better than the Army. The other paramilitary group is the Armed Forces Territorial Service. Before the war, that group was able to gather at least 120,000 recruits. Grouped in military patrols of 21 men each, they would conduct operations and harass all the neighborhoods and small villages. In a territory as small as ours, with only 21,000 square km, that 120,000-strong army was a terrible control machine. It was also a valuable resource during elections. The Salvadoran oligarchy would constantly call elections, not because of their democratic vocation but because they virtually controlled the results. The National Intelligence Directorate will also be broken up. This institution was the brain behind all the ill-fated national security polices. A new state intelligence institution will be created in its place, under the jurisdiction of the presidency of the Republic. Its personnel as well as its doctrine will be completely new. On the other hand, the Armed Forces educational system will be reformed and will be opened to ideological pluralism. Of course, these are not all the reforms that will be implemented. I have only mentioned the principal reforms.

[Borge] What degree of resistance to the implemention of the agreements do you foresee among the Armed Forces.

[Handal] A high degree of resistance. Those who have ruled the country, with an almost absolute hegemony, for more than 60 years will find it difficult to assimilate these changes. The division between ruling groups in El Salvador was evident after the New York Agreements. The division separates those who previously endorsed the negotiation and those who rejected and continue to reject it. All the structures, both within the Nationalist Republican Alliance and the Army, include people who are in favor or against it. The correlation of forces obviously totally favored a dialogue; otherwise, we would not have been able to conclude the negotiations. The groups that opposed the dialogue will continue to put up resistance, but they are very small and are becoming more and more isolated, although they are very aggressive.

[Borge] Will there be a general amnesty in El Salvador?

[Handal] The issue is currently being discussed. The military is exerting pressure on the government and its party for a complete amnesty, meaning to start with a clean slate, and there is a debate at the country level to oppose this. What good would the Truth Commission be then? The issue is also being discussed within the National Commission for the Consolidation of Peace. The New York Agreements provide the basis for an amnesty for the FMLN, and the military wants to extend it to everyone. The prevailing opinion is that the Truth Commission will determine which cases should be excluded.

[Borge] Will the death squads continue to operate under the new conditions?

[Handal] They have never ceased to operate. They continued to perpetrate crimes, even the day before the peace agreements were signed. That will be a major problem in this period when the fate of the revolutionary process is being decided.

[Borge] What consequences did the events in the USSR and Eastern Europe have within the FMLN? Some people thought they would preclude your struggle....

[Handal] Those people based their ideas on the false premise that the FMLN was not an internal movement with its own roots in our nation's history and culture. They thought we were an imported movement, simply a foreign aggression. They believed we would lose our ability to fight once the source of power failed. History put things in their true perspective.

[Borge] What role did the United States play in the process for a negotiated solution to the Salvadoran conflict?

[Handal] The United States momentarily endorsed negotiations following the 1989 offensive. That allowed the beginning of this complex process within the UN framework. The United States could have vetoed our peace initiative in the Security Council, but it did not. It seemed that the United States had opened the door to a negotiation then and there. That was followed by the defeat of the Sandinist National Liberation Front in the

elections, and the United States once more embarked on a search for our military defeat. The negotiations could not be deterred at that point, however; they had been started on the basis of new groundwork. Late in 1990 we were compelled to exert ourselves in a major military effort, a campaign that involved all the country. The objective truth emerged slowly: We could not be militarily defeated. Prolonging the war was detrimental to U.S. interests, given the new world situation. The United States had a major role in the September talks in New York, and it approached our friends. The negotiation was predetermined, the points had been established, and all the United States could do was discourage it. The United States bet on that card until the last moment. Once the document was signed at midnight on 31 December, they sought us out. Aronson visited us in the hotel and told us that the war between us had ended. He also admitted that they had always tried to stop us from winning.

[Borge] Did Aronson say that the war between the United States and the FMLN had ended?

[Handal] He did not actually say that, but he implied it. By the way, Commander Leonel Gonzalez asked him if the United States would try to prevent our victory in the political struggle. We did not get a clear reply.

[Borge] Do you believe the United States would tolerate an FMLN electoral victory?

[Handal] U.S. officials give statements in general terms, such as the ones Baker gave at Chapultepec Castle. He sought me out and we met for approximately five minutes. He said the United States wants the ageements to be implemented and that it is interested in the agreements—not as the lesser of two evils. He said the United States believes the changes outlined in the agreements are important. According to Baker, the United States is interested in seeing if the changes will really bring stability and prosperity to our country. He thanked us for what we said about the United States in our speech. I had said that the United States had objectively participated in the negotiations since September. I welcomed his initiative to talk with us. He replied that he had only been a diplomat for three years, that he was not a career diplomat, but that the experience gathered had been rich and he had had the opportunity to deal a lot with the enemies of the United States. Baker later went to El Salvador and made statements along those same lines. He even said the security of the FMLN leaders should receive serious consideration. All this was part of a carefully prepared speech: not saying things directly, but saying them. The contents of the speech also clearly stated that the United States considered everything that had been done to be legitimate, that it was right to support the Army. In our speech during the ceremony at which the agreements were signed, we tried to establish—when referring to the United States—the basis for a nonaggressive relationship based on dignity and cooperation.

[Borge] When you talk about the revolutionary process, do you refer to the contents of the agreements?

[Handal] Yes. The struggle that resulted in these agreements is a democratic revolution that has not yet ended. It will end when the agreements are implemented. The struggle will continue throughout this period until the first milestone—meaning 1994. General elections will be held in March 1994, when all of the country's officials will be elected: president, parliament, and municipal councils. This is simply a mathematical coincidence. The terms are different. This coincidence occurs every 15 years.

Discusses Elections, Socialism

PA0602033192 Managua EL NUEVO DIARIO in Spanish 3 Feb 92 p 4

[Part II of interview with Jorge Shafik Handal, Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front General Command, by Tomas Borge, member of the Sandinist National Liberation Front National Directorate; date and place not specified]

[Text] [Borge] What real perspective does the FMLN have in an electoral campaign?

[Handal] We are about to become a political party, and we plan to participate in the next elections. A concentration of forces took place during the negotiations because the FMLN agenda is so closely related to the national agenda. In particular, our demands for changes in the political system encouraged a general convergence of forces. The FMLN established diverse and extensive connections during the course of the negotiations. Our objective is not for the elections to result in a monolithic party solely in the hands of the FMLN. We strive for a pluralistic party as an expression of all the forces in favor of changes. Therefore, there is a real possibility that these forces as well as the FMLN may have a significant electoral victory in 1994. We plan to work toward this objective. The coming years will be filled with great accomplishments. Approximately 90 complementary legislative acts need to be enacted in order to give the agreement judicial validity. These legislative acts will be prepared by the National Commission for the Consolidation of Peace, Copaz, one of the participatory groups created by the negotiations. This commission is also charged with supervising the observance of the agreements. In fact, it is a joint government center. The whole country will ensure the observance of the agreements. Over a two year period, the Legislative Branch will be committed to discussing and approving this sizable number of laws. Copaz concentrates all political parties represented in the National Assembly, the FMLN, and the government. Because this commission has such a far-reaching jurisdiction, it can be rightfully said that it will steer the country. This will be reflected in the elections.

[Borge] The FMLN has referred to an unknown road for the revolution. Does this mean you are preparing to strive for power through peaceful means?

[Handal] Of course. We plan to reach this objective during the election campaign. However, we do not visualize power exclusively for the FMLN. A power that joins the forces in favor of changes, a power willing to take these changes to their culmination, must emerge from the elections. Thus, a new process will develop in El Salvador that will open the country not only to economic development but also to political and social changes.

[Borge] Are you renouncing socialism or just postponing it until some other time?

[Handal] The FMLN's beliefs are not yet clearly outlined. Of course, within our group the socialist objective has not been forgotten. However, what socialism are we referring to, and how do we advance toward it? This is still not clear to the FMLN or to the rest of the Latin American leftist groups. Some of us have stated our opinion with respect to this issue. We have tried to shape the road of transition to socialism. Our ideas have nothing to do with the socialism of the state that has failed.

[Borges] Are you referring to real socialism?

[Handal] Our starting point is that socialism must be once again socialized. That is, it must retreat from the hands of the state and return to that of society, as conceived by its founders. What does this mean in terms of political, economic, and social structure? Solving this issue is the great challenge awaiting the contemporary leftist groups. At any rate, to the FMLN, our foremost interest today is not theorizing. We all agree on the need to concentrate our efforts during this period, which is decisive for the revolution. With respect to the historical objectives, we do not plan to maintain the same degree of attention. I believe the success of the democratic revolution will determine the transition to a superior phase, a socialist revolution. This does not mean the transition to a socialist revolution will take place immediately, or two or four years after the democratic revolution. We must be clear about the direction in which we are headed, and we must begin to disavow all socialist romanticism. All that can be outlined in this respect will be main issues, and will based on our own historical experience.

[Borge] The revolutionary struggle in El Salvador has been closely linked with the struggle for democracy.

[Handal] One main issue is the failure of elections in the so- called true socialist countries. Socialism and democracy cannot be separated. A revolution must turn democracy into an instrument of participation and representation; not only that, it must be deep rooted to become irreversible. The transition to socialism does not entail quote surpassing unquote democracy because it is an inherent element, an essential achievement of socialism. Democracy will acquire much richer and deeper facets within socialism.

Another main issue, which I believe is quite clear nowadays, is that pluralism is not reduced to electoral and political aspects within the transition process. Instead, it is a concept that must be extended to the economic and ownership systems. Within the transition, it is essential to create a pluralist economy, referring to the ownership issue, instead of a mixed economy between the private and government sectors. We must change our views of the state. For example, we should not view certain state enterprises as levers, as the progress achieved by socialism. Simply put, the state must have certain economic resilience for functional reasons. This has no ideological connotations as far as the transition to socialism is concerned. The idea must be discarded. I meant the plural nature of the economy, a combination and coexistence of different forms of owning the means of production: private, capitalist, associated, social. We must even invent new forms of ownership.

[Borge] Worker participation in the ownership and direction of enterprises, for example.

[Handal] Yes, enterprises owned by the workers, under different legal forms. We must guarantee that these enterprises have access to the market and credits on an equal basis with private capitalist enterprises. This diversity of ownership systems must have something in common, a means to operate: the market. The state must maintain the rule of not discriminating against any sector. Associated enterprises must be properly organized—and they must operate competitively. This means they must have the same rights that private capitalist enterprises have. Capitalists like to proclaim freedom of enterprise and free economic initiative but these freedoms and rights are not respected in any Latin American country. Cooperatives and other forms of association, both in the countryside and in the city, suffer from discrimination. Small- and medium-sized enterprises also suffer because, in fact, the very concept of enterprise proclaimed by capitalists is based on the success of great capitalists.

[Borge] Everything proclaimed about free enterprise can no longer be the patrimony of capitalist private enterprise.

[Handal] That is right. Another main issue in this area is, for the sake of efficiency, the need to eliminate any idea of paternalism. People must learn to be competitive through their own efforts. That is the only way that workers who become owners will understand the importance of assimilating technological progress.

If these conditions are established, groups interested in a democratic revolution will be able to take the country to higher development levels. In my opinion, this is not a matter of passing from one station to another. It is a continuous process of changes that are not absolutely and totally programmed. Progress is achieved along

general lines and creative solutions are found along the way. Another main issue is to abolish the strict positions assumed by leftist parties and society as a whole. The state must be supported by the people's initiative and by the people's control, exercised within a democratic system. As you can see, I can only talk about main issues because no one has said the final word here. The leftist groups' views have failed to achieve much progress, so we not dare be more specific. Moreover, one of the benefits derived from the catastrophe that afflicted true socialism is that we are now compelled to use our heads.

[Borge] Within that context, what are the possibilities for Cuba's survival?

[Handal] Socialism was in need of an overall renewal. That is why we all applauded perestroyka in the beginning. It is clear, however, that renewing and defending socialism are inseparable, or there will be no socialism. Socialism can only be defended by renewing it, and can only be renewed by defending it. This is what is taking place in Cuba, where revolutionary men are trying to do just that. I am convinced that changes are being made there with the intention of renewing socialism. Those changes, however, must be made at a pace that must be compatible with the defense of socialism. Some times we would like to see faster and more sensational changes, but we must realize that the pace is also determined by the defense of socialism. The dialectic between renewing and defending socialism represents a challenge to wisdom, and to the intelligent and wise leadership that has always characterized the Cuban revolution. I believe it would be premature to reach conclusions on whether or not the lines followed by Cuba under the current difficult conditions, when it must not only renew and defend itself, but also overcome very serious economic problems, are correct.

The economic problems are basically due to a disruption of its relations with the USSR and East European countries. Because of the cruel U.S. blockade, Cuba had to resort to the economic and technological integration with socialist countries. The current rupture of those links has paralyzed a significant part of its economic activities. As I said, I believe it is still too early to reach definitive conclusions on Cuba. However, I do believe the basic strategy is correct. The least we can give Cuba is our solidarity and time to continue its efforts. If its efforts for renewal and defense are successful despite the U.S. blockade and the abrupt rupture in its economic and technological ties with the extinct socialist bloc, Cuba will have made a great contribution to the revolutionary ideas.

Value of Other Revolutionary Movements

[Borge] How do you view the FSLN and its prospects?

[Handal] The FSLN, despite its electoral defeat last year, continues to be the main and most coherent force, capable of making great transformations in Nicaragua. In my opinion, that role has been objectively secured because it has the support of the people. I believe that the FSLN's difficulties stem from the fact that its political and theoretical guidelines are still not firm. The electoral defeat was followed by a period of contradictions that threatened the FSLN's unity. However, the FSLN is the only force in Nicaragua that can guide society toward development, a more profound democracy, and socialism. This will require more unity, and great awareness of its capabilities. There is a polemic in Nicaragua, a debate which is unstoppable. Trying to stop it would only hurt the country. The dialectic of renewal and defense I mentioned in reference to Cuba is also valid for each of the leftist parties, and movements in Latin America.

We are definitely in favor of Latin American integration. We believe that participation in today's world, interdependent and dominated by powerful economic centers, makes it necessary to strengthen the possibilities for self-determination. It is inconceivable, from any point of view, to think of developing along an autarkic path, turning our backs to the world.

We must become part of the world just as it is...but we must make sure that we strengthen, not weaken, our possibilities of achieving self-determination. This way, the many economic centers in the world will be strengthening our integration instead of precluding our chances of achieving an autonomous development. Integration strengthens the nations. Referring to this, Latin America can very well use the opportunities offered in a multidependent and multiple-center world economy to decide which relations are worthy of an effort, to become part of the world and to provide an opportunity for the country's projects. I believe integration is essential; everything you do for the sake of cooperation and the integration of progressive movements within the parties must be seen within this context. I specifically see that COPPPAL [Permanent Conference of Latin American Political Parties] has an important role to play. We face a critical moment for traditional leftist ideologies, but this is not fatal. Quite the contrary, I believe this gives an opportunity to separate ideologies from dogmas. I still believe that Latin American leftists can give Latin America an alternative.

[Borge] Does the FMLN intend to join the COPPPAL?

[Handal] Yes, we have talked with Senator Luis Donaldo Colosio, its president. We told him we want to join COPPPAL. He said he endorses the idea...

[Borge] Will you try to join Socialist International as full members?

[Handal] We have yet to discuss that. We have always maintained good relations with Socialist International.

Panama

Chevalier Issues Statement on Investigations

PA0702173892 Panama City Circuito RPC Radio in Spanish 1613 GMT 7 Feb 92

[Statement by Juan Chevalier, government and justice minister, at National Police Headquarters in Panama City—live]

[Text] Good morning to everyone. I would like to thank you all for coming because we want the entire community to know the situation. Once the Panamanian people are informed, I believe everyone will take the proper measures to maintain the democracy we all want.

The first thing I would like to say is, in light of the events that began several weeks ago and worried the community—explosions, antitank rockets, bomb threats against different ministries and private enterprises—and conducted with the clear intent of creating an atmosphere of anxiety and destabilization, the National Police, fulfilling its duty of preventing and investigating crime, has conducted its work in a manner that, I believe, Panamanians should evaluate fairly.

What we will reveal today, still within the reservations necessary so the investigations are not undermined, is the result of a police investigation. I would like to stress this because the investigation was conducted by members of the National Police, who have not allowed themselves to be tempted by those who have proposed crooked plots. I want to stress that because it means our police force is in a position to provide security and purge itself, which is commendable.

I say this because former military personnel, who were members of the now defunct Panama Defense Forces, have been and are now involved in these destabilizing actions. Furthermore, some members of the Public Force, National Police, and National Maritime Service are also involved. The police have conducted an internal investigation that has led to the arrest of several persons involved in these criminal acts.

The president of the Republic mentioned on 6 February that a destabilization plan included the elimination of the president of the Republic and the capture of the two vice presidents, the president of the Supreme Court, the chief and deputy chief of the police, the current directorate of the National Police with its Director Oswaldo Fernandez, and myself as Government Minister.

These are serious things that cannot be taken lightly and require firm measures to stop actions that, if allowed to pass, all Panamanians will regret.

The investigation has been turned over to the proper authorities—the Attorney General's Office and the Judicial Technical Police.

In order to clarify some facts and allow an orderly sequence of events, I would like the director of the National Police to explain the facts to you.

Police Director Comments

PA0702180792 Panama City Circuito RPC Radio in Spanish 1619 GMT 7 Feb 92

[Statement by National Police Director Oswaldo Fernandez at the National Police Headquarters in Panama City—live]

[Text] Messrs. reporters: Regarding comments by the Minister of Government and Justice on events that have taken place over these past weeks and months—bombs, attacks—the police, following their constitutional and legal duty, began an investigation. We want to stress that the investigation was productive thanks to cooperation from individual policemen. Slowly but surely we began to find people. We spoke to many people—several dozen National Police members have cooperated. We discovered, to the detriment of our institution, that policemen, who have confessed before the Attorney General, have participated in these terrorist attacks with former Panama Defense Force members. We have irrefutable evidence. A plan existed and was brought up during testimony given at the Attorney General's Office on 6 February. The plan was scheduled to be carried out in December but was postponed because it was discovered by the police. Just as the Minister of Government and Justice mentioned, this plan, to which the involved parties have confessed, encompassed a political takeover. In addition, there were notes addressed to National Police lieutenants and first lieutenants asking them to join the movement because there was a need to struggle for the institution.

Based on all this evidence—confessions, documents, weapons—the police informed the Attorney General's Office as the proper authority to handle the investigation. People have confessed to the terrorist attacks against Charlie Pops, Hato Pintado, Harinas Panama, and the 7-11 store.

I would like to ask you as members of the media to stress two things: Although it is true that there are active National Police members involved in these actions that could have killed people, I also want to stress that we never would have learned about it but for the help of National Police members themselves.

Minister, Director on Arrest of Eduardo Herrera

PA0702204992 Panama City Circuito RPC Radio in Spanish 1625 GMT 7 Feb 92

[News conference by Oswaldo Fernandez, National Police director, and Juan Chevalier, government and justice minister, with unidentified moderator and foreign and domestic reporters at the National Police Headquarters in Panama City—live]

[Text] [Reporter] What is Eduardo Herrera's role in this arrest?

[Fernandez] Some of the people who made statements on 6 February before the attorney general appeared linked to Herrera. We received a written order from the attorney general on 6 February to transfer Eduardo Herrera from house arrest to National Police Headquarters. Herrera came here of his own free will, accompanied by his lawyer. They talked with the attorney general; Herrera was subsequently transferred to the Judicial Technical Police [PTJ].

[Reporter] Are any civilians involved?

[Fernandez] Up until now, the civilians involved are former Panama Defense Force members.

[Reporter] Have any other nations expressed support [words indistinct]?

[Reporter] [Question indistinct]

[Fernandez] None of the people who confessed has stated that....

[Reporter, interrupting] How many people are involved?

[Fernandez] There are currently eight persons detained.

[Reporter] What are their ranks?

[Fernandez] From lieutenants all the way down to corporals.

[Reporter] Are they active members of the Public Force?

[Fernandez] Some are former members, some are active members.

[Reporter] Who are the people involved?

[Fernandez] There is a principle of innocence until proven guilty. That question should be addressed to the Attorney General's Office.

[Reporter] What is Colonel Herrera's involvement?

[Reporter] How many active members and how many former members of the Panama Defense Force are involved?

[Fernandez] In total there are eight involved, five active members....

[Reporter, interrupting] Do you think that with five active members, the government can be toppled? [laughter]

[Fernandez] I am not saying that the five active members would topple the government. There are five persons under arrest; three have confessed. They have acknowledged that no one has forced them to confess. The investigation is currently being turned over to the PTJ and to the Attorney General's Office. The National Police investigation was an internal investigation. We now pass it on to those responsible in this area, with the statements made to the attorney general.

[Moderator] Gentlemen, in an attempt to maintain order during this news conference, I would appreciate it if you would allow me to moderate. It is your turn, Justino Gonzalez.

[Gonzalez] Where was the military arsenal found? What link does this current incident have with the arsenal?

[Fernandez] The arsenal was found in a San Miguelito residence, which is linked directly to one of the persons who have confessed to participating in the attacks. He has pointed out that these weapons were to be used for other attacks.

[Reporter] This morning on a radio program I heard a poll being conducted on [words indistinct]. The results of the poll show that the people [words indistinct]. This is like the story of the boy who cried wolf. Has the wolf finally arrived?

[Fernandez] I can tell you that we have arrested three persons, not three wolves. An investigation must be conducted; otherwise you would be the first to question my actions, you would be the first to criticize me, and you would be the first to say that I am an accomplice of one of the persons who is involved. The least we can do, as professionals, not as politicians, is to [words indistinct].

[Reporter] Were all those weapons found, allegedly found at Herrera's home?

[Fernandez] No, they were not....

[Reporter, interrupting] Why then is Herrera under arrest? Can you clear this up [words indistinct]?

[Fernandez] We received an order from the attorney general. The attorney general heard depositions, he issued the orders, and we have to obey the orders issued by that authority. The attorney general ordered that Herrera be brought here. Subsequently, the office of the assistant district attorney ordered a search of Herrera's house.

[Moderator] Samaniego from Canal [word indistinct].

[Samaniego] Does the government fear that, in the way it is handling Eduardo Herrera, it is creating an image that goes from victim to magician? Every time something comes up or something [words indistinct] Herrera is found guilty.

[Fernandez] That question does not fall under my jurisdiction ....

[Reporter, interrupting] What other information can you give us besides the arrests?

[Fernandez] In the written confession, acknowledged by the person who wrote it, the person indicates who instructed him on the plan. There are descriptions of

commando groups, which he claims will eliminate high-ranking government authorities, and there is talk of organizing a sort of triumvirate. There is also talk of restoring the Panama military members' [?credibility], as they claim the community rejects them. In addition, there is talk of eliminating the members of the National Police directorate.

[Reporter] Are they talking about military or civilian members?

[Fernandez] They do not state if they refer to civilian or military members.

[Moderator] Vilma Figueroa from LA PRENSA.

[Figueroa] Mr. Director, this question may be answered by you or by the government minister. Whenever a situation like this emerges, the same people are mentioned: former and current members of the Public Forces. Do you still trust the Public Force? Do you think that other members of the Public Force could be involved in this?

[Fernandez] I still trust them, now more than ever, and now for more reasons than ever, especially for one single reason: Had it not been for the members of that institution, we would never have known what we know now. That is point number one.

Point number two: I am not rejecting the possibility that there are other members involved. We cannot affirm that others are involved either. This is a matter that must be investigated by the PTJ and the Attorney General's Office. We have fulfilled our professional obligation. As I told your colleague a while ago, had we not done this, you would have been the first ones to question our decision.

[Moderator] Orlando Mendieta, EL PANAMA AMERICA.

[Mendieta] What is the link between these actions and the raid carried out on 3 February in a Curundu neighborhood shop, where the authorities found large-caliber weapons. Is there any link [words indistinct]?

[Fernandez] I do not know, because that raid was carried out by the State Attorney's Office and the PTJ. The police did not participate. What we know is what we have now, which is what we delivered to the proper authorities.

[Moderator] Alvaro Alvarado, Circuito RPC Television.

[Alvarado] Director, what is the link between this situation and Chalo Gonzalez [former Panama Defense Forces officer wanted by the current Panamanian authorities], with people under arrest at Renacer and La Modelo prisons, or with former members of the defunct Defense Forces?

[Fernandez] The police investigations have nothing on this. I do not know if something has come up in the investigations carried out by the attorney general.

[Moderator] Hugo Samaniega, Circuito RPC Radio.

[Samaniega] Can you tell us if Lieutenant Danilo Gallardo is one of the persons under arrest? Do you have any other names?

[Fernandez] There is a constitutional principle that persons are presumed innocent. We have to respect that principle, whether we like it or not. We cannot give out that information.

[Reporter] Have you received any backing from the United States? What are the political arguments of the coupists?

[Fernandez] When you speak of political support, to whom are you referring?

[Reporter] To the confessions these people have made.

[Fernandez] They have not involved anyone so far. The people who have made confessions have not mentioned any kind of foreign aid, from any side.

[Moderator] Favio Pino, Radio Panamericana.

[Pino] Mr. Director, did these destabilization actions have support from some political party?

[Fernandez] In their statements, these people speak of using former members of the Defense Forces first, and then anyone who wanted to join them. That is what the plan states. The plan speaks in general terms of a popular action.

[Moderator] Manolo Alvarez, LA PRENSA.

[Alvarez] Just one question: Have you established any link between the clandestine M-20 [20 December Movement] and this plot?

[Fernandez] None whatsoever. All of the arrested persons say they do not know about that and that whenever they used that name on the telephone, they did it to instill fear.

[Moderator] Tomas Cupas, UPI.

[Cupas] The president said something about the plan being called To Kill the Fat Man. What was the source of that information? What were the ranks of the arrested persons? How many lieutenants and how many corporals?

[Government Minister Juan Chevalier] The president referred to the fat one. We must admit that the president has a good sense of humor, even when he is the focal point.

He is so humble that he has a sense of humor even at his own expense. The written plans mention the president. One of the paragraphs says it is important to capture and

eliminate the fat one. When the president saw that, he smiled and decided that the document was referring to him.

[Moderator] Julia Elena Aviar, Telemetro Television.

[Aviar] It has caught my attention that the materiel here looks deteriorated, oxidated—not damaged—but oxidated. Last year you made an important seizure [words indistinct]. What is the link between that and the plan to kill the president? What about the alleged presence of organized groups in Chiriqui and Veraguas?

[Fernandez] The National Police are conducting an investigation inside the Police Department. We are not an investigatory organization like the Attorney General's Office. When we have specific evidence, not speculation, we must pass it on to the proper authorities. That is what we have done. That does not mean that anyone has been found guilty of anything. It is up to the courts to decide that. If some links are established in future investigations, that is fine, but so far no link has been established. Regarding your other question, Daniel Alonso has a list of what was found, and he is going to explain the use of each of the objects.

For example, all you have to do to make the 150 AK clips functional is to sandpaper them and then wash them with diesel fuel. The material you see are chemical components to produce enough C-4 to blow up all of us. The bombs that were placed were real. The [words indistinct] bomb was real, it was not a fantasy. The bomb that did not explode at the 7-11 was potentially the most deadly. You have been informed that it had a gadget so it would be set off by anyone who touched it. That was also real. Some of the arrested persons have admitted that they placed the bomb. They confessed to the time they placed it and to how they placed it. I think the police had the obligation to report that.

[Daniel Alonso] One moment, please. Before we give the floor to Mr. Cortez, hear this: The weapons are a U.S.-made light antitank weapon; C-4 explosives—that is a military explosive; and claymore grenades.

[Reporter] How many?

[Daniel Alonso] What you see here on the table.

[Reporter] How many?

[Daniel Alonso] There is one. There is TNT and there are 116 AK-47 clips.

[Moderator] Jose Cortez Ovalle from Circuito RPC Television.

[Cortez] Did the destabilization plan included actions throughout the country or just in the capital?

[Fernandez] According to the written plan and according to the statement made by the person who wrote it and who admits being the author of it, the operations were going to be commando operations. They would try to get support from the people.

[Moderator] Caballero.

[Caballero] Local media have reported that there is a Southern Command document acknowledging the existence of the M-20. I wonder if these arrests are a coincidence or if the Southern Command investigations have helped.

[Fernandez] We read in LA ESTRELLA DE PANAMA or some other newspaper about a document that one police organization requested from another. I can tell you officially that such a document did not exist. When we questioned the National Police members involved in these attacks on the existence of the group called M-20, they replied they did not know about it and that, if the group existed, they did not belong to it. The movement is called Torrijos Resistance, excuse me. In addition, there are several hundreds of notes addressed to lieutenants and first lieutenants asking them to join the movement they describe as Torrijos Resistance and that each of them bring 15 other people.

[Reporter] I have a doubt. Yesterday, Colonel Eduardo Herrera told LA ESTRELLA DE PANAMA that his home is surrounded and all his telephones are tapped. How can a person plot under such circumstances?

[Fernandez] That is your opinion. I can tell you that the National Police lack the means to tap telephones in the country. We do not even have tires or gasoline, much less the means to tap telephones. We do not even have uniforms. I would much rather have uniforms than telephone-tapping equipment. Regarding the surveillance of Herrera's home, it was ordered by the Public Ministry. I would like you people to understand this. We are not the Defense Forces. It is not the police but the proper authorities who rule in this country. The police must obey the authorities. We cannot tell the police what to do or not to do. The police must do what civilian authorities tell them to do. It has been done like this and will continue to be so as long as I continue to be the organization's director.

[Reporter] Can you tell us about the press conference with the leaders of the various state agencies and institutions held at the presidential building this morning?

[Chevalier] The president attended dinner at the Marriott Hotel last night. I do not know....

[Reporter, interrupting] No, I saw the president of the Supreme Court of Justice and the Attorney General come in.

[Chevalier] Then it was not last night. Excuse me. Unless you have more information than I do.

[Reporter] I cannot have more information than you do.

[Chevalier] I have only replied that what you mention did not take place last night. The president attended dinner at the Marriott Hotel last night. I accompanied him.

[Reporter] There was a meeting at the presidential building yesterday afternoon.

[Chevalier] Right. At the meeting, the chief of police and I reported to the president on the results of the investigation.

[Reporter] The meeting was with the president and not the National Security Council.

[Chevalier] The president of the Supreme Court of Justice and the Attorney General were there.

[Reporter] Were the members of the National Security Council there too?

[Chevalier] Not that I know of.

[Reporter] Mr. Director, what are the ranks of the five Public Force members that were arrested?

[Fernandez] Lieutenants, first lieutenants, sergeants....

[Reporter, interrupting] How many of each?

[Fernandez] One lieutenant, one first lieutenant, two sergeants, and one corporal. The corporal, one lieutenant, and a former sergeant confessed.

[Moderator] LA CRONICA.

[Reporter] What relationship does this have to the arrest of an American in Santiago, Veraguas last year with a large-caliber weapon and one map of the capital city? Are the Americans involved?

[Fernandez] What I have just told you is all we know so far. I would be lying if I told you we have that information. We do not want to speculate. Whatever information we get, we present it to the Public Ministry. May I repeat: It is the Public Ministry's duty to investigate, and it is up to the courts to issue any resolutions they regard as proper. It is not up to the police.

[Reporter] Mr. Director, [words indistinct] national involved?

[Moderator] Thank you for this news conference. Any additional questions?

[Fernandez] Look, some of the people who testified have mentioned this. The attorney general has already taken the proper measures.

[Reporter] Mentioned as what?

[Fernandez] I cannot tell specifically because the attorney general has the testimony.

[Reporter] [words indistinct]

[Fernandez] The PTJ and its director went to Herrera's home. Herrera was asked to accompany us. Naturally, Herrera was upset. In the end, however, he agreed to come with us.

[Reporter] [words indistinct]

[Fernandez] There was a dispute. Herrera, however, came to the police station.

[Reporter] [words indistinct]

[Fernandez] [words indistinct]

Eduardo Herrera Taken to Modelo Prison

PA0802012292 Panama City Circuito RPC Television in Spanish 2329 GMT 7 Feb 92

[Report by Fernando Kant]

[Text] Colonel Eduardo Herrera, retired, has been taken from Judicial Technical Police [PTJ] headquarters to Modelo prison.

Herrera's lawyers and relatives were surprised to learn of his transfer because the charges on which he was arrested have not yet been clarified.

PTJ officials, especially Carlos Landero, rudely tried to obstruct the RPC Television crew's work—in full enjoyment of our freedom of expression—thereby emulating attitudes of the military dictatorship.

The decision to transfer Herrera to Modelo prison was made after Ariel Alvarez, Sixth Court judge of Chiriqui Province, decided to reject, by means of writ No. 50, the request made by Dr. Alma Lopez de Vallarino to exchange the precautionary measure that has kept Herrera under house arrest for another measure that would allow him to work and care for his family.

Judge Alvarez described the request as outdated and ordered the preventive arrest of Col. Herrera because, according to sworn statements made by Octavio Lorenzo Vega and (Donay) Gallardo Vergara before the attorney general, Herrera has violated the regulations established in the precautionary measure because he is linked to the acts of violence that have taken place in Panama City in the last few days—acts aimed at creating a climate of instability and violence in the country.

After arriving at Modelo prison, strict security measures were immediately implemented, thereby preventing journalists from talking to Col. Herrera before he was taken inside. Herrera remained inside the vehicle for about 10 minutes. He was closely watched by heavily armed PTJ and National Police members. [passage omitted]

Vallarino protested Judge Alvarez' decision:

[Begin Vallarino recording] I want to denounce this incident because it all happened due to an order given by the attorney general. The attorney general has meddled

in the affairs of the judicial branch. Last night, 6 February, the attorney general actually told us that today they would revoke the precautionary measure of house arrest. The situation that has taken place in Chiriqui Province has not been a genuine measure dictated by the Sixth Court judge. The attorney general was actually interfering in the judicial branch's affairs. We are taking steps backward. The independence of the judicial branch cannot be guaranteed by means of handwritten notes under any circumstance: The independence of the judicial branch is guaranteed by exercising it. I ask the judges, the prosecutors, and the magistrates to be truly independent. When they dictate an order of this kind, they should do so according to their conscience and the law. They should not heed anyone's instructions, no matter what their origin. I repeat, this order shows the attorney general's interference in the judicial branch's affairs. [end recording]

Habeas Corpus Filed

PA0902191992 Panama City EL PANAMA AMERICA in Spanish 9 Feb 92 p 1

[Text] Lawyers for Eduardo Herrera—alleged leader of the "Little Fat Man Operation," a plan to eliminate President Guillermo Endara—filed a petition of habeas corpus with the Supreme Court to study the legality of the arrest of this retired military officer.

The legal action was filed against Attorney General Rogelio Cruz, who, according to a spokesman for the Attorney General's Office, will take up his own defense early on 10 February.

Donai Gallardo, a lieutenant in the Public Force and former member of the Special Antiterror Service Unit, has revealed the conspiracy to neutralize Endara and capture Vice Presidents Ricardo Arias Calderon and Guillermo Ford, Supreme Court President Carlos Lucas Lopez, and Government Minister Juan Chevalier.

According to Gallardo, the Little Fat Man Operation did not include other former officers who had participated in the December 1990 rebellion, such as Jorge E. Bernal and Julio Vallejos. Eduardo Herrera was reportedly disappointed with these officers.

Lieutenant Confesses to Plot To Kill Endara

PA0902131392 Panama City LA PRENSA in Spanish 8 Feb 92 p 1A

[All quotation marks as published]

[Text] Donai Gallardo Lopez, an active lieutenant in the Public Force, has confessed that the plotters intended to organize groups that would "neutralize" President Guillermo Endara, the two vice presidents, and Magistrate Carlos Lucas Lopez, president of the Supreme Court.

In a sworn statement in the presence of Attorney General Rogelio Cruz, Gallardo said that Magistrate Lopez would be neutralized because, after the country's highest authorities, he could request U.S. intervention, according to the Constitution.

Gallardo also said that, after meeting several times with a man named Pedro, a driver for former Colonel Eduardo Herrera, he, Gallardo, outlined the creation of four groups consisting of people he thought would agree to participate. The groups were identified as Captain Braulio Bethancour, Capt. Sydney Lyon, Sergeant First Class Filemon Montero, and Sfc. Tomas Orozco Zaldivar. "I selected 15 names for each of the groups," he added. "Based on Pedro's guidelines, I prepared a handwritten draft assigning the responsibilities of each group," he said.

Gallardo further stated that the Braulio Betancour assault group would take the National Navy headquarters and its weapons and then the presidential building, where they would capture President Endara.

The Sydney Lyon group would take Ancon and its weapons and later would take the Legislative Assembly and everyone in it. The group would secure the position and search and disarm all individuals in the Assembly.

The Sfc. Filemon Montero group would split into four smaller units, which would take the Area 2 garrison in Parque Lefevre and the Area 2A garrison in San Francisco and any arms held there, the National Air Service, the Tocumen Airport, and the Paitilla Airport. That group would also be in charge of capturing the minister of government and justice, the president of the Supreme Court, and the two vice presidents and taking them to a safe place.

The lieutenant said that late in January, after getting in touch with Pedro, he "entered Col. Herrera's residence with the help of Sgt. Carlos Zamora, a member of the National Police on duty in the canal area.

Gallardo said that during his meeting with Herrera he, Gallardo, heard about Herrera's "frustration with former officers, specifically Major Vallejos and Capt. Bernal, who allegedly had not returned money and arms belonging to Herrera." According to Gallardo, Herrera told him that he, Herrera, had already completed the political portion of the plot, but that "the police had to do their part and consolidate their assigned objective of creating popular unrest through work stoppages, strikes, student demonstrations, etc. and installing a provisional junta that would govern for several months. Then a constituent assembly would be called.

Gallardo said that in another meeting with Pedro, the latter told him he would go to Chiriqui and "bring some required equipment," but that this "had to be done gradually."

"Close to this date, Mr. Pedro asked me to store a German RPG-18 rocket launcher for him, and days later he came to get it. A few days later I heard him say that he had launched the RPG rocket against Harinas Panama [local flour mill]," he said.

Gallardo explained how the attack on the residence of architect Delfin del Busto in Hato Pintado took place. He also said that he placed a homemade bomb inside a garbage can near the Charlie Pops ice cream parlor. He said, however, that he had no knowledge of the explosive device placed at the Planning and Economic Policy offices.

On page 2 of this edition we have published the complete testimony rendered by another person involved in the terrorist acts, Octavio Jose Lorenzo Vega, former member of the Panama Defense Forces.

Authorities Report Eight People Have Been Arrested

The authorities confirmed yesterday that the plan to overthrow and assassinate President Guillermo Endara also included the kidnapping of the two vice presidents, the Supreme Court president, and top National Police officers, as well as the installation of a triumvirate to replace the current rulers of the country.

National Police Chief Oswaldo Fernandez said that eight people have been arrested thus far, including former military officers and policemen; a corporal, a Public Force lieutenant, and a retired corporal have confessed everything about the plan.

During a news conference at National Police headquarters, the authorities displayed several fragmentation grenades, an antitank missile launcher, chemicals to prepare incendiary bombs, and 100 rusty magazines for AK-47 assault rifles. The materiel was confiscated from a home in San Miguelito, it was reported.

Fernandez said that the "evidence is irrefutable" because several people have already confessed to their participation in placing bombs.

It has been reported that the alleged conspirators sent several letters to various National Police officers asking them to join the plotters because the institution had to be saved.

Meanwhile, the Sixth Criminal Court in Chiriqui Province, by means of an official telegram released yesterday, canceled the precautionary measure that had been granted a few months ago to Eduardo Herrera and ordered his preventive arrest.

[Panama City CRITICA LIBRE in Spanish on 8 February on pages 1 and 18 and Panama City EL PANAMA AMERICA in Spanish on 8 February on page 1 state that the following people have also been arrested by the Attorney General's Office in connection with the plot against Endara: Lt. Danilo Gallardo, who serves in Area B of the National Police and is a former instructor of the defunct Special Antiterror Service Unit, UESAT; 2d Lt. Adriano Ferrer (not further identified); Sgt. Gil Gonzalez of the National Maritime Service; Sgt. Zamora who serves in the canal area and is a former bodyguard of deposed General Manuel Antonio Noriega and Col. Eduardo Herrera; and Sgt. Octavio Lorenzo Vega, formerly of the Panama Defense Forces]

Witness Gives Testimony on Planting Bombs

PA1002001492 Panama City LA PRENSA in Spanish 8 Feb 92 p 2a

[Text] In Panama City on 6 February 1992, at 2235, the attorney general and the Attorney General's Office Secretariat appeared at National Police headquarters to receive sworn statements by Octavio Jose Lorenzo Vega. Once the pertinent authorities were established, the witness was asked to give his personal data, which he described as follows: I am the son of Lauro Lorenzo and Cecilia Vega.

Immediately thereafter, authorities read to the witness Articles 351, 352, 253, and 355 of the Penal Code that deal with offenses regarding false statements, punishable acts, slander in legal actions, and false testimony, respectively, requiring him to swear in.

Witness, answer, why are you here before these authorities?

The witness replied: I enlisted in the Panama Defense Forces on 22 August 1980. I was subsequently assigned to the Macho de Monte Brigade. After working there one year, I was sent to a diving course; four months later I was sent to a Panajungle course; and eight days after finishing that course I was sent to a military parachutist course.

In 1983 I was sent to take a basic course in explosives. One month after finishing that course, I was sent to take an advanced course in explosives. From then until the end of 1984 I was sent to take a military nurse course. Then I worked (he does not remember the exact time) from five to eight months. In 1985 I was sent to Cuba to take a course in submarine infiltration and demolition that lasted until 19 April 1986. On my return, given my high marks in the course, the general command appointed me to General Noriega's personal guard.

On my return to the Public Force [FP] I was assigned to the DIP [Police Investigation Department] until 5 December 1990, when I was dismissed. I then got a job with the SPIS Diving Company until July. Then I talked with Mr. David Quintero, who offered me a job through September 1990 buying and exporting lobsters. Afterward I was unemployed. In December 1991 I participated in the 20 December march and I met with Mr. Cedeno, Mr. Gustavo Perez, Mr. Carlos Duque, Captain Donadio, and Mr. Gallardo. We walked to El Chorrillo. We drank some beer with Gallardo, who told me what he thought about the government. I gave him my phone number in case he wanted to talk to me. About 18 days later I received a call from Gallardo, who said he wanted to talk to me. He asked if I wanted to come to his house in Monte Oscuro, and I agreed. He told me to come the next day at 1700. He picked me up at the Villa Rica bus depot and we went to his house. We began to talk. He

explained that he did not agree with the government and with what the government was doing and he wanted to change that. He asked me if I truly knew how to make explosive devices or bombs. I answered that I knew, that I was a specialist in making bombs. He asked me if I dared to make an explosive device. I said I did, and I asked him what he wanted it for. That day he said he would tell me later for what and whom it was intended. He said he had a contact that had been clearly identified as a movement that would change the government. I answered that I would help him if his intentions were good. I then left for home.

Approximately four days later I received another call. He asked me if I could meet with him. I said yes, but added that I had no money to travel. He said he would send someone to pick me up. That is what happened. I was taken to Bethania where he was waiting for me. We went to his house. Once there he showed me the explosive he wanted to use (C-4) and two detonators. I asked what kind of bomb he wanted. He said he wanted a time bomb. I asked him if he had clocks. He said he did not. I told him if he wanted a time bomb he had to get the clocks. He said this was not a problem, then I left.

He called me again and told me he had gotten the equipment. He told me to go to Bethania park and that he would pick me up there. At 1800 he picked me up and we went to his house. He showed me the clocks, explosives, and detonators and told me he wanted to make more than two bombs. I told him I could only make two bombs because there were not enough clocks. Then I started making the explosive devices. From there he went to work. At 2100 he came by to pick me up and I had the explosives ready. We went to Hato Pintado because he told me he had seen a good place to put it. We went to the place. When we got there, he told me there was a Land Cruiser in which we could put the bombs. I said there was too much light there and that I was not going to risk being seen.

We went in the patrol car to look for a place to plant the bombs because they were activated and time was passing.

We drove all around Hato Pintado until we reached Via Espana. We drove around Hato Pintado again, passing by the home of Mr. Delfin Del Busto. A white Cherokee truck was parked on the edge of the street. Gallardo told me the vehicle would be a good target, and I placed the device under the fuel tank. We then took another device to a place chosen by Gallardo. We entered the basement of the building where the Capo's Bar discotheque is located, and Gallardo told me it was a good place. I asked why I should place a device there. He instructed the driver of the patrol car to leave. We drove to the front of the basement where the 7-11 is located. When we turned around by the ice machine, Gallardo told me to place the device behind it. I asked him why and asked where else could we put it. I told him that since time was passing and the device was activated, we should put it by the power meters in the basement so it would cause a power outage in the building. We planted it and left for home.

When we reached the Tumba Muerto highway Gallardo told me he wanted to cause a serious power outage and that we should go look at the installations behind Santa Maria la Antigua University [USMA]. We went there and I told him I disagreed with him because I did not want innocent people to die. We then visited the towers located in the El Bosque neighborhood; he looked at the towers and sized up the distance between the towers and the Institute of Hydraulic Resources and Electrification [IRHE] installations to see if he could throw a grenade from where he was.

I told him it would be a mistake to throw a grenade because the distance was very far and nothing would happen.

We then left for my home. When we got to the new Dairy Queen in front of the USMA, Gallardo ordered the driver to go in and buy something to eat. The driver bought three french fries, three sodas, and two pieces of corn on the cob.

We went to the Condado del Rey neighborhood, where Gallardo wanted to check out the security of the IRHE installations and to see if there were any easy targets there. After this he received a call in the patrol car asking where he was and saying he was needed at the base. He answered that he was nearby and would get there in five minutes. Before reaching the headquarters in front of the Venezolana Bakery on the Camino Real in Bethania, Gallardo told me to get out and go to the bus stop on the Transisthmian Highway, where he would pick me up later and take me home.

The next day I heard on the news that the Hato Pintado bomb had exploded. I called former Lieutenant Perez Icaza to ask him if he had heard. I told him to come to my house because I wanted to talk to him. Two hours later he arrived. I went downstairs to explain what had happened. I told him one bomb had not detonated and asked him if he dared take me to El Dorado to deactivate it because it could kill innocent people. His response was that he did not dare because they would investigate me because they had been following him.

Four days later Mr. Gallardo called me and said yes but he did not have money to purchase the food and he would pass by my home. [sentence as published].

That afternoon at about 1500 Gallardo came to my house to talk to me. We went up to the attic and he started telling me he wanted to collect enough material for a coup d'etat. I told him I would not need him until the end of January and that I would not vainly hope to topple the government because it already looked like a

difficult project. He told me he would try to help me get a job through friends of his, and that he wanted me to make more bombs because he now had key objectives. I responded that I would have to be paid some money to maintain my family.

Gallardo later told me he wanted me to make a trip to Penonome to see if the Macho de Monte [Brigade] had equipment and said he would provide a car. He later changed his mind and said the car was in the shop.

Five days later Gallardo told me he wanted to meet me again, and I told him that Sublieutenant Ferrer wanted to talk to him. He replied that he would call me and tell me where they could meet. Later that afternoon, he called me and told me he would be at the El Dorado bowling alley at about 2100. I told him I wanted him to go. At about 2000 or 2030 on 21 January I went to the bowling alley with Sergeant Benito Bethancourt. There I found Sublt. Ferrer with Gallardo. Right here in this office I found out that the surname of the man with Gallardo that day was Zambrano. Gallardo told me he did not want me to meet Zambrano. I told Gallardo that Mr. Antonio Ferrer wanted to talk to him, and he said that would not be a wise thing, but since we were there to call him. I called Ferrer with a nickel Zambrano gave me. Half an hour later Ferrer arrived and we entered the bowling alley where Gallardo, Zambrano, and Bethancourt were seated. I introduced Gallardo to Ferrer, saying this was the man who wanted to talk with him. Ferrer asked him what was wrong. Gallardo said nothing was wrong; there was a gentleman who would support Ferrer by providing a few rifles. He added that these would not be enough if they had a lot of people and that he was trying to get more rifles.

Ferrer asked him why he had placed the bombs and Gallardo answered that it was to instill fear in the government, to make the government believe the movement is large.

Ferrer said this was a mistake because instead of terrorizing the government he was only putting it on its guard, which is disadvantageous. He told Gallardo to lower his guard for a while because the government was closely following their activities with a lot of surveillance.

Ferrer said he had a friend in the U.S. Army, that this friend had told him the U.S. Government was tired of this government's mistakes, and for that reason the U.S. Government would not back the Panamanian Government in a number of things, including a coup, unless there was looting, in which case the U.S. Government would intervene to control the country. Gallardo replied that these people were not trustworthy and that he should not believe what the man had told him. Bethancourt just listened. Zambrano said something, but I cannot remember exactly what. Then we went into the house. Ferrer took me home.

I cannot remember what day I went to former Colonel Eduardo Herrera's home. I had asked former Lt. Perez Icaza to Herrera's home and Perez said he could take me there whenever I wanted. He and Herrera's driver picked me up at noon the next day and we went to Herrera's house. We drove around the area once to see who was in charge of security. First we saw a red Toyota Carina with four DIP men on a street near Herrera's house. I got out of our vehicle to say hello to my friends. I recognized three of the four. Then we drove to Herrera's house and parked our car in front, where we met a security man in uniform. We entered the residence and were greeted by Herrera. The man who works for him introduced me to him. Herrera asked me whether I was an active FP member. I said I had been discharged on 5 December. Herrera said he could not help me now but that this mess had to change, that he was struggling for his retirement check, which he still had not collected. He added that he had been having trouble because someone had uncovered several checks issued to him when he was major and ambassador to the United Nations. At the time, the sum allocated to him had been raised because he could not live in the United States on a $1000 monthly salary. Consequently, he had requested and received $3000 monthly travel expenses. That is what had been plaguing him. That situation and many other things, like the hospitals, had to be changed and improved. I told Herrera one would have to be smart to change this government. He replied that it was necessary to be careful because there were spies everywhere. I noticed he appeared to be very nervous because he cast frequent looks around the house. Then he told us to leave but said we should take care on leaving because there were people interested in killing him.

After this date, I did not talk with any of the gentlemen I have mentioned because I traveled to Penonome, where my mother lives. Later, I applied for a job at the Panama Canal Commission.

I wish to take the opportunity to mention something I had overlooked. Gallardo told me that a successful businessman, currently in favor with the government, had 28 firearms. Gallardo, however, did not specify the types of weapons or the name of the employee who gave him this information. Gallardo mentioned the weapons only. The next day, after I planted the explosive charges, I telephoned Ferrer at his home and asked him to come to my house because I wanted to tell him something. He came that night. I told him I had planted two bombs, one in the Hato Pintado area and another in El Dorado. He asked me why. I replied that Gallardo had asked me to make the explosives. I complied, and gave the charges to Gallardo already fused. On seeing the charges fused, Gallardo got frightened and asked me to plant the explosives myself. I did.

In view of the late hour, this office declares this portion of the inquiry complete. Its record is hereby signed by everyone who participated. This inquiry will resume in a few hours.

Party Leader Calls Herrera 'Scapegoat'

PA0902031092 Panama City LA ESTRELLA DE PANAMA in Spanish 8 Feb 92 pp A1

[Article by Doris Hubbard Castillo]

[Text] Isaac Rodriguez, member of the National Integration Movement (MINA) leadership, feels that Colonel Eduardo Herrera Hassan (R) is a "scapegoat" used by the government to divert the country's attention from real problems.

Rodriguez was asked about statements by President Guillermo Endara, who said that the military officer is involved in a plot to kill the president. Rodriguez said that "this issue of the so-called coup d'etat is nothing but a mechanism used by a government that has failed to provide solutions."

"The people are disappointed, and the authorities should prove what they say. They want us to believe that a coup d'etat is being planned whenever three shotguns are found at a given place—yet we all know the government is actually backed by the largest Army in the world," Rodriguez indicated.

The labor leader, who was dismissed from the Institute of Hydraulic Resources and Electrification as a result of Law 25, said that—with these constant rumors about coups—anyone who gathers with others will be accused of being involved in a subversive movement and state terrorism will be unleashed.

Meanwhile, Mitchell Doens, first assistant general of the Democratic Revolutionary Party (PRD), said that his party does not endorse violent actions as a means to change governments. In fact, he said, his party wants Endara to stay until 1994 because "the people will be so disappointed with his administration that the PRD will get many more votes."

Doens said he considers it suspicious that, precisely at a time when debates on important issues are being held in the country, another topic is brought up to divert the people's attention.

"I find it interesting that, just like in December 1990, coups d'etat and violent actions were mentioned after the transportation strike occurred. In my opinion, these reports only worsen the country's detabilization," he said.

Doens also said he would not be surprised if the transportation leaders were suddenly involved in the alleged conspiracy, adding that the group's leadership would be disrupted just like Law 25 was used to strip the labor movement of its leaders.

Singer-writer Ruben Blades, acting president of the Papa Egoro Party, was asked about the same topic by a local station. He said that people should be careful about making those accusations.

Nationalist Liberal Republican Movement President Alfredo Ramirez said: "One of the worst mistakes one can make in a democracy is not to defend that democracy and to trust that, because a government is the result of legitimate elections, nobody will be interested in ousting the government. That is naive."

Endara: Country Not Ready for U.S. Withdrawal

PA0702162692 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 2144 GMT 6 Feb 92

[Text] Panama, 6 Feb (ACAN-EFE)—Panamanian President Guillermo Endara admitted on 6 February that his country is not ready for the U.S. Southern Command to withdraw from Panamanian territory. He said, however, that his government and the next administration must do everything necessary to face the withdrawal of the U.S. troops.

That was how Endara, in his weekly news conference, answered questions about the eventual relocation of part of the Pentagon's Southern Command's activities to Brazil. The Pentagon announced on 6 February the relocation to Brazil as part of the new design for its relationship with the Latin American military.

The president, who took office shortly after the beginning of the U.S. invasion on December 1989 which ousted former General Manuel Antonio Noriega, announced that U.S. Defense Secretary Richard Cheney will visit Panama "soon."

Endara said he will not propose to Cheney a renegotiation of the permanence of the U.S. military bases on the banks of the Panama Canal, which will revert to Panama on 31 December 1999 in accordance with canal treaties signed by both countries in 1977.

"There is no indication that Cheney will propose such a thing (the renegotiation of the military presence) to me. If he asks me, I will listen respectfully, and in the same manner I will answer no," he said.

The United States has approximately 10,000 soldiers stationed in Panama at the so-called "defense sites" located along the 80 km of the interoceanic waterway. Half of these troops are supposed to leave before 1995.

Endara mentioned that when he took office "practically nothing had been done to prepare the country for the withdrawal of the U.S. troops." According to independent economists, this will cause a loss of $600 million in annual income.

"We are trying to make up for lost time, but I must admit that, as of today, we are not prepared for the Southern Command's withdrawal," Endara reiterated.

Besides the withdrawal of U.S. military personnel, the United States will turn over to Panama the full control of the Panama Canal, which is currently directed by a U.S.

federal agency. Five Americans and four Panamanians participate in that agency and Gilberto Guardia, one of the Panamanians, is the current administrator of the canal.

According to reports from Washington, Cheney will tour Guatemala, Brazil, Argentina, and Chile in mid-February, his first trip through Latin America, to propose the beginning of a new era of reciprocal cooperation.

In the meantime, groups of progovernment workers and politicians have emerged in Panama advocating a referendum to decide whether the U.S. troops should remain in Panama beyond 2000.

Argentina

Di Tella Confirms Suspension of Nuclear Shipment

PY1002015292 Buenos Aires LA PRENSA in Spanish 8 Feb 92 p 4

[Text] Foreign Minister Guido Di Tella today officially confirmed to Senator Remo Constanzo of Rio Negro Province that the shipment a Rio Negro Province company was to make to the Iraqi Government [as published] finally had been suspended because of the need "to analyze some aspects relevant to international relations."

For his part, Constanzo conveyed to Di Tella the need "to preserve Invap [Applied Research Institute]," the Rio Negro enterprise that was to make the shipment, "from any possible economic consequence stemming from the decision to suspend the shipment of nuclear material." Constanzo was thus referring to possible economic losses for Invap.

In an official Foreign Ministry communique, Di Tella vowed to make "every effort to resolve the problem, to seek new lines to take advantage of the exceptional abilities of Invap experts, and to offer full support within the national government to consolidate Invap's economic, financial, and technological development."

The Argentine Government decided to suspend the shipment of nuclear material to Iraq [as published], presumably after yielding to international pressure in the face of the nuclear shipment's possible use by that country's government to manufacture nuclear weapons.

Substitute Customer Sought

PY0702215292 Buenos Aires BUENOS AIRES HERALD in English 7 Feb 92 p 11

[From the "Argentina in Brief" column]

[Text] The Argentine Government has decided to find a substitute for Iran in the sale of nuclear materials due to pressure from the United States. Foreign Minister Guido Di Tella had stated earlier that the export of nuclear material to the Middle Eastern nation would only take place if Iran signed specific safeguards. Since Di Tella admitted that if the Iranian Government did not comply with specific conditions, the 18-million-dollar sale would not be possible.

Minister Denies Reports on Dismantling Condor-2

PY0702140692 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 1130 GMT 7 Feb 92

[Text] Buenos Aires, 7 Feb (TELAM)—Defense Minister Antonio Erman Gonzalez today said that the Argentine Condor-2 missile is being submitted to "a review of the inventory" before being transferred to the National Space Activities Commission [CNAE].

"There are no plans for destroying the Condor-2 missile now," the minister said, thus dismissing a report published today by a morning newspaper. The report said that the "dismantling" of the missile would take place on 10 February under the supervision of U.S. inspectors.

In statements to a radio station, the minister said: "We are reviewing all the facilities, machines, tools, and elements of the Condor project, which was born with a peaceful objective but which later underwent some distortions."

Gonzalez said that the idea is to transfer the missile—following an executive branch resolution—to the CNAE, which was created by Decree 995/91 and "which will take charge, as of 11 February, of all project facilities."

The CNAE will also "hire technical personnel and researchers to undertake projects with peaceful objectives in the service of mankind," the minister said.

He said: "At this time, a U.S. mission exists as a result of a request that the government submitted to the NTCR [expansion unknown], the organization that monitors the transfer of long-range missile technology, to prevent the proliferation and availability of this technology to anybody in the world."

He added: "The best guarantee that we can have for defending our sovereignty is a modern, well-equipped military organization that fully respects international law. All actions by the Argentine Government seek to uphold international law through cooperation with the United Nations."

He recalled that "this was the spirit behind the decision to send two ships to the Persian Gulf and this is the spirit behind the presence of Argentine officers and noncommissioned officers in seven or eight countries as part of the UN peacekeeping forces."

Erman Gonzalez added: "We are entering a new world stage where there are agreements by which every one makes concessions in order to obtain some advantages: For us, the advantage consists mainly of rejoining the international scientific community."

Bolivia

Chuquisaca Department Forms De Facto Government

PY0702133092 La Paz Radio Fides Network in Spanish 1100 GMT 7 Feb 92

[Report by Sixto Valdes from Sucre]

[Text] The inhabitants of Sucre must have lost their minds. In an open council meeting to protest the cuts in the budget of Chuquisaca Department—with the participation of all the public—the inhabitants of Sucre declared Sucre a federal capital and appointed de facto authorities. More than 30,000 Sucre inhabitants

attended this civic meeting yesterday. They harshly criticized the central government for neglecting Chuquisaca Department.

Chuquisaca has given a harsh blow to the administration of Jaime Paz Zamora. For the first time in 452 years, the inhabitants of this department yesterday decided to immediately constitute a departmental de facto government. The decision was taken because of constant government indifference, extremist centralism, insensitive bureaucracy and technocracy, and eternal neglect of this department. Public and private activities in Chuquisaca Department have been paralyzed for 48 hours.

Even the judicial branch, whose main seat is in Sucre, has endorsed this civic decision that has been applauded by all Sucre inhabitants. Civic, union, and university leaders, councilmen, private businessmen, and other leaders (?praised) the unity and civic attitude of the citizenry. They also criticized the government's indifference in always neglecting Chuquisaca, which has now fallen to a fifth-rate department. This is why the Civic Assembly, which met yesterday in an emergency session after staging a protest march that was attended by thousands of Sucre inhabitants, decided to form as of today a de facto departmental government.

Local councilmen, civic, peasant, and university leaders, including the San Francisco Javier University rector, are beginning a hunger strike today. Sucre congressmen and other representatives in La Paz are urged to join the hunger strike, threatening to withdraw the Chuquisaca representation.

Another act of protest against the government will be a march to La Paz that will be made in the form of a caravan. If the central government still insists on ignoring Chuquisaca Department, the Chuquisaca inhabitants will cease paying taxes, close the valves of the gas pipeline to Argentina, block roads, and begin a massive hunger strike.

The Civic Assembly has called the national cabinet to come to Sucre immediately to solve the region's problems. Chuquisaca Department needs a $61 million budget but has only been allotted $46 million by the executive branch. During the large civic march, the Sucre inhabitants sternly condemned the violent police repression against the university students that staged a march yesterday. The [name indistinct] leaders said the government has lost its mind, resorting to repression as in the saddest days of the dictatorships of Banzer and Garcia Meza. University Rector Enrique Azurduy, who today began a hunger strike, has been one of the harshest critics of what happened in Caracollo, Oruro.

[Begin Azurduy recording] [passage indistinct] we cannot forget the [words indistinct] that the Bolivian university students suffered in Caracollo. Ideas cannot be killed with bullets amid a full democratic process. No one has the right to use violence or to create a blood bath. [applause] [end recording]

Peru's Osterling Meets Paz, Senate President

PY0702155492 La Paz Television Boliviana Network in Spanish 0200 GMT 7 Feb 92

[Excerpt] Peruvian Senate President Felipe Osterling today held important meetings. He met with President Paz Zamora and with the Bolivian Senate president. During a press conference, he said that the Peruvian Senate has hailed Bolivia's access to the sea through the Port of Ilo. He added that the Peruvian Senate is concerned about trafficking developments in Peru.

Osterling personally praised President Alberto Fujimori's decision to grant Bolivia access to the sea through the Port of Ilo. He said:

[Begin recording] I am an opposition politician, but I pay tribute to President Alberto Fujimori for this step that, in my opinion, is a major step. We will strive toward Latin American integration, we will promote Bolivian-Peruvian integration, and Peru will welcome everything that can promote actual integration, beyond mere words or rhetoric. [end recording] [passage omitted]

Brazil

U.S. Consul Identifies Policeman as Attacker

PY0802022792 Rio de Janeiro O GLOBO in Portuguese 7 Feb 92 p 14

[Excerpt] Jeffrey Peterson, the U.S. consul in Rio de Janeiro, last night recognized Detective Paulo Cesar da Silva, of the Special Precinct for Women (DEAM) in Nova Iguacu, as the policeman who, on Monday night, first attempted to kidnap Peterson as he was leaving the Hollow Point target shooting range in the Barra da Tijuca neighborhood, and then tried to extort money from him. The identification procedure was carried out in a lineup at the Police Internal Affairs Department. Although Peterson was quite adamant, da Silva claimed to be innocent.

Da Silva is already under custody, and police have requested that a judge order his preventive detention. Elson Campello, Specialized Police General Department director, said that because da Silva has been a policemen for less than two years he is still on probation and will be expelled from the force. Da Silva also will face kidnapping and robbery charges. Da Silva joined the police in December 1990 and served in the Silva Jardim precinct before being transferred to the Nova Iguacu-based DEAM in August last year. [passage omitted]

Guards Reinforced Along Border With Venezuela

PY0802143292 Sao Paulo FOLHA DE SAO PAULO in Portuguese 6 Feb 92 p 4

[By Efrem Ribeiro, special correspondent in Boa Vista]

[Text] The guards of the Army battalion in Surucucus (300 km from Boa Vista, Roraima) received orders to

fire upon any airplane that invades Brazilian airspace near the border with Venezuela. This was reported by Major Calixto, from the 5th Section of the Amazonia Military Command (CMA).

The major downplayed the order, saying that it is a "routine" decision and "nonspecific for the border region between the two countries." In Brasilia, the Army Ministry was unaware of the order.

"It is a routine order when one is threatened. The guard must not be violated. Logically, the order is to shoot. The guard must not allow anyone to enter his area to take over," the major said. The existence of the order was leaked to journalists in Manaus by a soldier who serves in the Surucucus battalion.

Maj. Calixto also confirmed that the helicopters—a UH-1 and a Squirrel—were sent to the Surucucus battalion. Pilots from the National Indian Foundation observed the two helicopters maneuvering in the border area. According to the major, they were carrying out "border surveillance and maintenance" missions.

The Army Border Command in Roraima in the past few days maintained a group of 40 soldiers in Vila Paracaima, located between Boa Vista and Santa Elena (Venezuela). The major believes that the presence of the Brazilian soldiers at the border was ordered after the Army learned that the Venezuelan Army was in a state of alert as a consequence of the coup attempt in that country. The Brazilian soldiers inspected the area to prevent Venezuelans from fleeing into Brazil.

CMA Commander Carlos Anibal Pacheco today must visit border posts in Rio Branco (Acre State), Tabatinga (Amazonia State), Sao Gabriel da Cachoeira (Amazonia), and Boa Vista.

Pilot, Prospector in Downed Plane Machine-Gunned

PY0802005092 Rio de Janeiro Rede Globo Television in Portuguese 2200 GMT 7 Feb 92

[Excerpt] It has been confirmed. The pilot and gold prospector passenger of the plane downed by the Venezuelan military were shot to death. This was established by the medical report that the Federal Police director general handed to President Fernando Collor today.

The revelation of what happened in Venezuela after the prospectors' plane was downed by the National Guard was brought from Unicamp [Campinas State University] by Police Chief Romeu Tuma. The 50-page report includes pictures and confirms that pilot Jose Xavier de Mendonca and prospector Moises Ferreira were machine-gunned at point-blank range. The Foreign Ministry received the report and sent a copy to President Collor.

[Begin Tuma recording] The president wanted information on all of the circumstances that caused the downing of the plane and the death of the pilot and a prospector. [end recording] [passage omitted]

Marques Moreira on Economic Ties With Germany

PY0802150092 Sao Paulo O ESTADO DE SAO PAULO in Portuguese 7 Feb 92 economic section p 9

[Report by William Waack]

[Text] Bonn—"Excuse me for expressing myself in this manner, but the nuclear agreement with Germany has been the worst mistake of the military administration. All other debts had a positive effect on Brazil, but this one did not," Economy Minister Marcilio Marques Moreira told a group of German reporters early yesterday morning in the Brazilian embassy. This is one of the most categorical declarations ever made by a Brazilian official about a treaty that has already been described as "the deal of the century" and that, until the present time—nearly 17 years after it was signed—did not produce even one kilowatt of energy.

It was, however, the only punch the Brazilian minister threw against relations between Germany and Brazil. The minister described Brazil as a country offering excellent alternatives for private German investors who are worried about political instability, the social catastrophe, and the military uncertainties of the East European countries, especially the former Soviet republics. "It is difficult for any of those countries to demonstrate on a short-term basis the same business capacity Brazil already has," Marcilio said.

Marcilio yesterday heard from German officials the suggestion—already made last October by Chancellor Helmut Kohl—of signing an agreement to guarantee and protect German investments in Brazil. Although Brazilian diplomacy has traditionally been contrary to such agreements, Marcilio yesterday said that the Brazilian Government no longer maintains a "dogmatic attitude" in this field. "We doubt whether an agreement of guarantees is the best path to give safety and stability to private investors, but we nonetheless accept discussing the subject."

German reporters wanted to know whether Marcilio is worried about the possibility that German investments may now take only one direction: East Germany and Europe, in face of the high inflation rate and instability that are characteristics of Latin American economies. The Brazilian minister thinks that reality is contending with forecasts made two years ago when the Berlin wall fell.

"Latin America was being considered a region that could be erased from the map of international investments. Official credits and investments continue to go to East Europe, but private investments continue to come to Brazil. I have recently been in Brazil with the presidents of Daimler-Benz and Volkswagen AG who both told me that they will invest $3 billion in Brazil in the next 5 years," Marcilio said.

Marcilio several times cited Eastern countries as countries struggling with difficulties to pass from a command economy to a market economy. He compared them with Brazil, which is economically dynamic enough to pay its debt without asking for pardons and to attract private investors immediately after a "normalizing" process with the international financial market through different stages, like the negotiation with the Paris Club, a broad agreement with the IMF, and a broad renegotiation with the private banks.

"We are not Poland," Marcilio said.

Government Reactivates Economic Defense Council

PY1002151492 Sao Paulo O ESTADO DE SAO PAULO in Portuguese 9 Feb 92 Economic Section p 5

[Excerpts] Brasilia—The government hopes that the Administrative Council for Economic Defense [CADE] will be able to attack the economic abuses committed by monopolies and oligopolies. The government has criticized the CADE for having been inactive and sluggish for the past 20 years. President Fernando Collor decided to close this institution as part of the administrative reforms since it has not punished any enterprise for price abuses since its creation in October 1972. Ruy Countinho, the recently installed CADE president, said: "This happened in the past. We currently have strong and efficient legislation." Economy Minister Marcilio Marques Moreira has said that the strategy against economic abuses will succeed if the CADE is reactivated. Government experts fear that this new attack on the economic carteis could be a new attempt at achieving political gain. [passage omitted]

Before implementing the administrative reforms promoted by the Collor administration as of 1990, the CADE was the only institution that legislated and judged abusive prices in the market. In view of its inactivity, the Collor transition team decided to suspend its work. Based on the new law on free competition (Law 8158) the government created the National Economic Right Secretariat [Secretaria Nacional de Direito Economico]. [passage omitted]

Venezuela

Perez Addresses OAS Representatives 7 Feb

PA0802024192 Caracas Venezolana de Television Network in Spanish 1616 GMT 7 Feb 92

[Speech by President Carlos Andres Perez in the Ayacucho Room at Miraflores Palace in Caracas—live]

[Text] Mr. Chairman of the OAS Permanent Council, Mr. OAS Secretary General: On behalf of the Venezuelan Government and people, I wish to state our heartfelt gratitude for this historic gesture from the OAS, represented in its highest organization, its Permanent Council, which decided to send its chairman and secretary general to Venezuela to personally express the solidarity of all the people on the American continent and their governments with the Venezuelan Government and people, following the unfortunate incident our homeland experienced. That support was expressed in a document stating the definite and categorical determination of all the nations on our continent to express their solidarity with democracy and to counter any attempt or plot against the American people's sovereignty and their legitimately appointed governments.

We welcome you in a ceremony that includes the participation of all those who represent the highest officials in the Venezuelan state and the leading groups in the nation: the president and vice president of the Venezuelan Congress, former presidents of our country, the president and members of the Supreme Court of Justice, the secretaries general and other distinguished leaders of the Venezuelan political parties represented in our National Congress, the attorney general of the Republic, the president of the Supreme Electoral Council, the president of the Judiciary Council, the president of the comptrollership general of the Republic, the presidents and representatives of the Confederation of Venezuelan Workers [CTV], the Venezuelan Federation of Associations and Chambers of Commerce and Industry [Fedecamaras], representatives of the leading groups in our country's activities, and the directors of the main news media.

In sum, this....[Perez interrupted by unidentified speaker, who says softly: His Eminence the cardinal, the highest representative of the Catholic Church] In sum, this gathering in the Ayacucho Room in Miraflores Palace includes the broadest and most appropriate representation of the Venezuelan nation—the government and its executive cabinet; the military high command, led by the defense minister; officers, generals, admirals, commanders, and subordinates, who lead the Venezuelan Armed Forces' activities. We also have here members of the opposition, critics of the public administration, as well as leaders of the opposition parties. We have a full representation of our nation, and we proudly proclaim to the world and to you, Messrs. OAS representatives: We are all as one, thus achieving our nation's unity in proclaiming our definite and firm determination to live in democracy. The cunning plans carried out against our democratic homeland at midnight lasted but a few hours, and they were crushed and defeated so that constitutional order should prevail again.

The OAS Permanent Council chairman and secretary general said that there is no room for dictatorships, for government imposed by force in Latin America. The world's reaction in support of Venezuela was an impressive event. From the very moment when the world learned—a few minutes after it started—about the armed and traitorous assault against the Republic, telephones in Miraflores Palace proved insufficient to receive the personal calls of all the Latin presidents, who stated [pauses] excuse me, from all over America, because President Bush and Canadian Prime Minister

Mulroney also called to state their solidarity and rejection of the coup. Messages of solidarity also arrived from Europe and Asia. Through these cables we felt the whole world's full solidarity with Venezuelan democracy. Venezuelans feel proud, but we also feel indebted because of this demonstration of support for our people and our democracy.

The painful circumstance of the rebellion has united the Venezuelan people, and now we can appear united before the world and the OAS representatives. We also must reflect and reach the conclusion that this spontaneous process of unity should now lead us to study the advisability of considering this as a starting point within our democratic process, so that we can revise our actions without giving up our right to dissent—which is the essence of democracy—and seek possible points of consensus and possible agreements. We will be able to tell our people that those who represent them in the diverse and varied activities in our national life....[Perez changes thought] This event brought us all together and those of us who rule the nation's destiny must realize that, despite controversies and criticism, we must seek points of consensus on issues that can very well be settled without political confrontations.

Even on those issues on which the controversy is focused, we can also respond to the world by expressing our gratitude for the solidarity expressed with Venezuela, establishing rules for the controversy and debate. These rules lead us to believe that many times, in the excitement of discussion or in the stubbornness of controversy, we can contribute unknowingly to laying the foundations for some people to think that there are grounds for launching adventurous actions to consummate quests for power, as we experienced on that terrible morning of 4 February in Venezuela.

Here we are dealing not with a movement that had rightful claims or with people subjugated by tyranny, unable to freely express their views, form political parties, or discuss the problems of the country. This was a rebellion motivated not only by ambition, but also by an antidemocratic ideology that—although this term has been repeated many times—can be defined clearly as a fascist ideology. When the terms of the manifesto that the rebels were going to deliver to the nation after seizing power in a treacherous manner are known, you will learn that they disavowed the existence and significance of the political parties, they condemned the democratic system, and they spoke about a new way of governing; namely, fascism or totalitarianism, a violent and arbitrary imposition on the country.

This is what Venezuelans now should think about and reflect upon. Friends and adversaries of the government have joined their effort, because democracy is shared by all Venezuelans. Had this rebellion succeeded, our fatherland would have experienced atrocious times. We would have lost everything except the international solidarity and the action of the OAS, under the commitment of Santiago de Chile. This also would have caused problems for our people—which our people would have withstood—because it would have been a matter of restoring democracy to our fatherland.

But in these brief statements, I have not mentioned a great institution because I left this for the end of my speech. I am referring to the Venezuelan Armed Forces. Venezuelans had proclaimed proudly that, after experiencing long dictatorships in our fatherland, we had developed an exemplary harmony between civilians and the men in uniform. We presented the Armed Forces as an exemplary institution, staffed by professional soldiers, soldiers respectful of the law and the Constitution, soldiers who follow orders without reservation and who are loyal to civilian authorities.

Now, on this solemn occasion, I have the great opportunity to reiterate that the Venezuelan Armed Forces deserve and have the confidence of the entire country. The top officers responded with loyalty to the premeditated attack by a group of individuals who dared to rise against the Constitution and the Republic. Most Armed Forces officers, of all ranks, responded with loyalty. We could witness and feel the anger of the privates who said that they were deceived into participating in an operation they did not want.

The Venezuelan Armed Forces will continue to guarantee Venezuelan democracy. Here, on this occasion, I am not going to thank them, but I am going to congratulate them because they rightfully fulfilled their duties. This is why the rebellion lasted only a few hours, after the insurgents had managed to control an important part of Venezuelan military power.

And what should I say about our people? At dawn on 4 February, showing that the exercise of liberty and democracy is customary, our people began their regular activities. On the morning of 4 February, such political representatives of the people as Humberto Celli, Democratic Action [AD] president; Hilarion Cardozo, president of COPEI [Social Christian Party]; Eduardo Fernandez, secretary general of COPEI; Luis Alfaro Ucero, member of AD; Freddy Munoz, representative of the Movement for Socialism [MAS]; Pompeyo Marquez, founding leader of the MAS; and representatives of other political groups, whose names I do not dare mention because I may unwillingly forget some, ran their risks. I have limited myself to mentioning the three largest parties in Congress.

On the morning of 4 February, the leaders of the aforementioned organizations appeared on different television stations. There, they shared with the president moments of danger and expressed support for the Armed Forces. They appeared to calm the population and reaffirm that there was no chance that treason could crush Venezuelan democracy.

This is....[Perez changes thought] Representatives of the OAS; diplomatic representatives of American countries; Papal Nuncio, who represents the diplomatic corps

accredited in Venezuela: At this time, we want to reiterate before our country and through the television cameras that we appreciate your enthusiastic gesture of support for Venezuelan democracy. We know we are not alone. We know that Venezuelan democracy is defended not only by the people's willingness to live in democracy. We must not forget that democracies have sprung up throughout our continent. Unfortunately, we permitted a dictatorship to come to power in the smallest Latin American country, in Haiti.

Here with us is Haitian President Aristide. When we in Venezuela endorsed the reinstatement of the Haitian Government, because nonintervention cannot be used to favor dictators but to respect the people's will, we did not believe that our defense of Haitian democracy would later become an important factor for Venezuela. We did not know that our country would be the next victim of totalitarian treason. We were lucky enough to witness the maturity of our people, a maturity that allowed us to defeat treason in only a few hours—which was not accomplished in that unlucky and brotherly Haitian fatherland. This tells us that the decision made in Santiago, Chile, to empower the OAS to prevent the will of our people from being violated, is a necessity for all our fatherlands.

Now more than ever, our energetic position on Haiti is understandable. We are able to understand not only our solidarity with that nation, prompted by our democratic creed and our participation in the OAS, but also by the defense of our own democracies. Now we are lucky enough to tell the world with pride that our country has returned to normalcy, that the activities of our people normalized after only a few hours of interruption, and that our nation believes in democracy, struggles for democracy, and never will live under a dictatorship. Our nation believes and shares the idea that we must defend democracy together. Now more than ever, after the disappearance of the heinous threat of nuclear holocaust following the end of the East-West confrontation, the OAS and other regional security organizations in the world should be strengthened, as I stated at the summit of the UN Security Council.

These are the conclusions we must draw from the dramatic lesson we have experienced. But the most important conclusion is that we should not waste this moment of unity among the Venezuelan people to seek agreements that will permit us, within the democratic dialogue, to unite our goals for the great Venezuelan fatherland. Thank you very much.

OAS Official Makes Statement

PA0802044292 Caracas Venezolana de Television Network in Spanish 1612 GMT 7 Feb 92

[Speech by OAS Secretary General Joao Clemente Baena Suarez in the Ayacucho Room at Miraflores Palace in Caracas —live]

[Text] Your Excellency, Mr. Carlos Andres Perez, president of the Republic of Venezuela, friends of Venezuela and of our hemisphere: Mr. President, first of all, I would like to say that the emotion I am feeling at this moment is shared by all. It is an emotion of democracy, Mr. President, an emotion that was previously expressed during the OAS Permanent Council meeting when this resolution received unanimous support.

The president of the Permanent Council has already stated our organization's reaction. It is a reaction in favor of democracy, as well as a rejection of any violent act or any threat to use force against a democratic process.

Mr. President, I would like to emphasize that there is no possible turning back. There is no possible turning back because there is faith, trust, and democratic conviction in our people that will always move against any event seeking to change the conditions of an ongoing democratic process. Needless to say, there will always be some type of threat to democracy. However, what is more important is how all of us react to these threats. I believe the democratic system can provide answers to the predicaments of our people. Brute force will never provide adequate solutions.

Our organization is decidedly in favor of consolidating democracy in the hemisphere. As you know, Mr. President, since the General Assembly's last meeting in Santiago de Chile, the OAS has devised an adequate mechanism to respond to coup situations. This mechanism has already been used on one occasion. In addition, the OAS can respond as it has responded in the case of Venezuela: with unanimity. This organization is prepared to extend to the Venezuelan people, to the people of any member country where democracy is threatened, the certainty of its solidarity and its support to the legitimately elected authorities of those countries.

Mr. President, we have been able to witness the civic spirit of the Venezuelan people. We have seen that all sectors of Venezuelan society gathered to defend democracy. We were also able to witness that the military institution reacted in favor of the constitution and democracy.

I am honored to be here with the president of the Permanent Council to say that, in addition to the reaction of the Venezuelan people, there is also the reaction of the all the nations of our hemisphere represented in our organization.

Mr. President, there is no turning back in the democratic process. Thank you very much.

OAS Council Issues Resolution

PA0802011392 Caracas Venezolana de Television Network in Spanish 1600 GMT 7 Feb 92

[Resolution issued by the OAS Permanent Council; place and date not given—read by announcer]

[Text] The OAS Permanent Council supports the democratic Government of Venezuela. The OAS Permanent Council, in considering how the overall existence of a democratic government guarantees effective application of the principles stated in the OAS Charter, and how the solidarity of its member countries guarantees their search for high ideals, requires a political organization in each country member based on the exercise of a representative democracy.

Reaffirming the commitment to democracy made in Santiago and the renewal of the Inter-American system adopted by the OAS General Assembly at its 21st Ordinary Session, and in view of the events that took place in Venezuela during the early morning hours of 4 February in the form of a coup attempt to overthrow the legitimately established government and to murder its head of state, the OAS Permanent Council hereby decides:

First. To emphatically condemn the armed uprising against the democratic government of President Carlos Andres Perez and the reprehensible attack against his life.

Second. To express outrage against all those sectors that sought to usurp the people's sovereignty and the democratic will of the Venezuelan people through violence. This democratic will has been repeatedly expressed by means of systematic and continuous elections that have reinforced a solid democratic tradition.

Third. To express its resolve and unconditional support for President Carlos Andres Perez and to congratulate the Venezuelan people for its energetic reaction against this deplorable attempt to interrupt its constitutional journey.

Fourth. To restate the decision of all OAS member states to respect and strengthen the principle of democratic solidarity and to jointly act in accordance to the OAS Charter and the Santiago commitment, reaffirming that there is no room in this hemisphere for regimes based upon brute force.

Fifth. To empower the president of the Permanent Council to convey the present resolution to the Venezuelan Government.

President Signs, Discusses Security Resolution

PA0802231392 Caracas Venezolana de Television Network in Spanish 1555 GMT 8 Feb 92

[Speech by President Carlos Andres Perez at a special ceremony to mark the signing of a resolution authorizing private security firms to assist police in anticrime activities; at the Bolivar Plaza in Caracas—live]

[Text] Mr. Minister of the Interior and other members of the Executive Cabinet; Mr. Governor of the Federal District and other district authorities; Mr. President of the Venezuelan Federation of Associations and Chambers of Commerce and Industry [FEDECAMARAS] and other private enterprise organizations; officers and members of the Metropolitan Police High Command; members of private surveillance organizations; dear friends: The great events that shook Venezuela during the early hours of 4 February, the ill-fated attempt against democracy in our homeland, and the deep concern and worry that demand my attention, could not keep me from attending this ceremony that—as the president of FEDECAMARAS pointed out—although it appears to be of lesser importance, plays a major role because of the urgent matters that Venezuelan society must deal with at present.

That is why I am here. The country's activities have not been paralyzed for an instant. We must take care of the most significant and important matters, but we also must bear in mind that what appears most irrelevant is, by contrast, what almost always most concerns and demands the attention of the Venezuelan people. The problem of personal safety has become the topic of constant complaints by residents of the metropolitan areas of Caracas and all other large Venezuelan cities. Personal safety is what affects public tranquillity most directly. Personal safety has become the most pressing demand. Apparently, this does not have anything to do with us. Yet, it has become the most common daily expression emerging from the people's lips. Let us bear in mind, and not forget as we sometimes do, that our homeland has lived most of its history under dictatorial governments of violence and force that imposed their will over the will of the people.

We inherited this tradition. The public order problem is a responsibility of the Armed Forces and the police. Because of this dichotomy, it has become their duty to guarantee our tranquillity and the protection of our property, this total alienation and separation between one part of the nation and another. This situation must be corrected. Of course, authorities have been established for this purpose, to guarantee public order and the tranquillity of all and to coordinate the services rendered to the community. This activity, however, is never to be conducted separately from the people, never by sharply outlining the responsibility of each part. Quite the opposite, democracy is a completely different type of relationship.

We Venezuelans have not become accustomed to this. It is the basic cause of many of the evils and problems that we have experienced in our history. The dictatorships' actions apparently fixed on our history and on our daily lives certain habits and customs that prevail in relations between the authorities and citizens in Venezuela. This is, dear fellow countrymen, one of the causes of the many evils we suffer. We can see it in all our activities. If a citizen walks along a certain street and sees that an INOS [National Institute of Social Projects] pipe is broken, he immediately thinks: What a bad government. Look how much water is being wasted while there is a shortage in so many houses and neighborhoods. He never thinks of looking up the INOS office telephone number to report the occurrence. [applause] If a minister passes along a

street and sees something wrong, he thinks: This is not the business of my ministry, but of some other. I do not have to interfere.

As a result of this dichotomy—which has existed for over a century and a half—the sense of cooperation and the framework of society do not work in our country. That is why our services are inadequate. The citizens must understand that these services do not belong to the government, but to them, and that the service is paid for with everyone's money. As soon as we begin to think and act like this, things in Venezuela will experience a marked change. For this situation to change, however, those in charge of directing and leading public and private activities must act firmly every day so that the people and every Venezuelan can understand that this is the proper behavior.

The problem of public order and tranquillity concerns everyone, those with authority and those without. A basic sense of solidarity among citizens binds us. It is an axiom of public order and international law that any citizen becomes a police authority in the presence of crime, which he must report or try to prevent.

We do not see this in our country. Venezuelans feel it is the responsibility of the police; it is the government's responsibility.

We also have laws that contribute to this. If a citizen helps an injured person, he is arrested as soon as he arrives at the emergency room because he is suspected of injuring that person. [applause] Thus, we continue to promote a lack of social solidarity. We must change all this.

This ceremony, which seems so unimportant that it does not deserve the presence of the president of the Republic and other high-ranking officials of the community of the Federal District, instead has a great pedagogic meaning and is the expression of a great democratic spirit. It is meant to create solidarity in society, in the capital of the Republic, and make us all feel that some of us, due to our particular offices and the rest, simply for being citizens, are all committed to one purpose and objective.

Here in Caracas, in the metropolitan area—due to the complexity of life—a system of private security has been developed. A number of organizations have been created to provide internal security to a number of industrial, commercial, and other establishments. As was said here, it already is a force that employs several dozens of thousands of citizens, who have been trained for protection and security. Security services have been seriously neglected in this huge city. Besides this, the great city's rapid growth, unemployment, and other problems that have accumulated present us with a really dramatic situation that makes the citizens feel insecure. The government receives the most urgent and angry protests because of this situation.

Even if a few more patrol cars are purchased and the police corp is enlarged, the government is not able to give the people a feeling of security and tranquillity. The government and the police, as large and well prepared as they are, cannot protect a city of over 4 million inhabitants if there is no cooperation from all sectors of society.

Neighbors who discover a crime must report it to the police. The police must have the means, will, and responsibility to answer immediately the calls they receive. Social organizations that are formed in the cities must contribute and promote habits among the citizens to deter crimes and support the citizens' will to confront security problems as a group.

Thus, we have a huge legion of private guards who work for their enterprises, but who have nothing to do with what happens outside those enterprises. Individually, they want it to be that way because no liaison system has been created and the possibility of cooperation between these services has not been discussed.

The government has proposed an initiative, which has had a very enthusiastic and voluntary response from private security organizations, as well as business organizations.

That is why we are all here; the nation, the government, businessmen, workers belonging to private security organizations; and, of course, the representatives of the state's security agencies. We want to tell Caracas residents, as an example for all states in the country, that the governor of the Federal District has issued a directive. These private security agencies are, by their own nature and because of their responsibility toward the people, assistants to the public security agencies. A mechanism has been created whereby these private security organizations not only will do work assigned to them for a certain fee stipulated in a contract signed between an enterprise and a private security agency, but will cooperate with the community to provide security to the people who live in the city. Dear friends of Caracas, this is what we have signed here.

All of these private security agencies are auxiliaries of the public authorities and will add to the security and tranquillity of the people. These fellow countrymen, who have been providing a service to businesses at the risk of their lives, will now be encouraged because they will play a great citizens' role, in addition to protecting enterprises in compliance with a labor contract. They now will have the pleasure of contributing to the tranquillity of the people by expanding the scope of their activities. This is the importance of this event, which meets one of the Venezuelan people's most pressing demands—their demand for tranquillity and safety.

The governor also has reported that neighbors will be similarly organized. Within the development of democracy, this is an unusual and praiseworthy initiative, which will give local residents a clear sense of their power and their value as citizens, as well as their right to make demands and to criticize. Neighbors also will get a chance to exercise a human being's basic virtue—his neighborly duties. Neighborhood associations represent

the humanization of the city, the collective expression of the essential feeling that every citizen must experience toward his fellow countrymen—solidarity. The neighbor or solidarity associations must say: We demand that the authorities guarantee our security and that, as part of this society, demand the right to participate directly in ensuring our own security.

These are the feelings and principles that should accompany those of us who are part of a democracy. These are the principles that should make us truly participate in democracy. We should become educated in these principles, which are embellished by virtue, truth, and solidarity, so that we will not have another early dawn as horrendous as the one we experienced on 4 February, when we heard the sound of the weapons issued to a group of fellow countrymen to defend our tranquillity and sovereignty that were used instead to bolster their ambitions and to deal a treacherous blow to democracy. Insane thoughts or twisted ambitions—that always will painfully exist in human beings, fortunately a minority—can best be stopped by the citizens, who will never accept them and will always reject them. [applause]

The armed forces are the dictatorships' strength. The strength of democracy lies in its citizens. Let us never forget this. In a democracy, the armed forces work for peace and symbolize and guarantee the country's sovereignty and, of course, the population's overall tranquillity. This tranquillity, however, rests essentially and primarily with the population themselves.

When those painfully miscalculating, aberrant Venezuelans perpetrated this aggression against the Republic, they surely thought that our people would welcome them with open arms, that our people would agree that their will—expressed with their votes—could be defeated by force of arms, by the assassination of the president of the Republic and his family. Had these heartless plotters truly taken into consideration the fact that the people would not concede this possibility, they never would have attempted such a move. This is why the first lesson to be drawn from this frightening experience we all suffered on 4 February is the need to tighten the bonds among Venezuelans and to put our solidarity with one another at the service of the nation. It does not matter if we disagree with one another, if we hold differing views, if we belong to different parties, if we consider certain governmental measures good or bad, if we do not look upon a particular government with special favor, or if we belong to a specific party. All that really matters is that we feel like Venezuelan citizens, citizens of a democracy.

That is the feeling we must begin realizing. By feeling like citizens of a democracy, we find that the concept of the fatherland, which is an expression of unity, is above disagreements and political controversies. That concept is symbolized by this great man on his horse—this statue of Simon Bolivar.

If we look at Venezuela's republican history and its dictatorships, we find that all the dictators have used Simon Bolivar's name and that the great abuses and the great massacres against the Venezuelan people have been carried out in Bolivar's name. We must vindicate this American genius, our Simon Bolivar, America's Simon Bolivar. How can we vindicate him? By doing as he did, each one of us. By copying his authentic lessons, to serve his fatherland and America's freedom as he did in his moment and at the time of the birth of the fatherlands of Latin America.

These are the feelings that we are evoking in this simple ceremony in which we are joining the authorities with the people, in which we are saying that the dichotomy, the separation between government and citizen must end forever. They must be the same thing, and cooperation is essential.

We must think about this lesson, and we have to tell ourselves that in our fatherland no one has the whole truth. A government, no matter how powerful it may be, no matter how much authority the Constitution gives it, must understand that citizens have the right to express their opinion and the government has the duty to listen. Rectification always must take place according to the traditions, the habits, and the procedures of a government. Social organizations—which are larger than individuals—also must understand that we must place the collective aspirations and ambitions of the fatherland above the aspirations and ambitions of their members. We must never accept that a group of citizens, just because they have the weapons of the Republic in their hands, can decide for all the citizens on the future of the fatherland.

My fellow countrymen, these are the things that we all must think about—right here in front of the statue of the liberator, with the sound of the explosions, the cannons, the rifles, and the crackling sound of war machines that the state had made available to guarantee peace for our citizens—are still ringing in our ears.

We also can look back with optimism because we see we have achieved progress, despite all the losses and problems we have experienced. We see that a savage action like this would have been successful in the past. We could have awakened on 4 February with a new dictatorship in our country, bringing an extinct fascism back to life, but it did not happen, first of all, because our current Armed Forces are educated in democracy.

Warped people infiltrate any institution, along with their evil ambitions. The fact is that the Armed Forces told Venezuela: You can continue to count on us. We will not offend the homeland by trying to replace it. We are loyal defenders of the Constitution.

Second, it did not happen because the Venezuelan people would not let the homeland be insulted and betrayed like this.

I have used this simple but important ceremony because it deals with the most insistent and fair request from the

community—the guarantee of the citizenry's tranquillity. We wanted to share these reflections with you. They all deal with a single essential concept about democracy—citizens' solidarity. Thank you. [applause]

Perez News Conference on Coup, Domestic Issues

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[News conference by President Carlos Andres Perez in the Ayacucho Room at Miraflores Palace in Caracas with unidentified moderator and foreign reporters—live]

[Text] [Moderator] Jose Covas of EL PAIS, Spain, please approach the microphone and begin this important event.

[Covas] Mr. President, there are many reports that civilians would have participated in this attempted coup d'etat. The proclamation prepared by those who participated in the plot describes a national reconstruction junta, or something like that, and a retired general gave—during an interview that was published recently—what could be considered a complete description of the persons who were going to participate in the junta. In addition, it seems that students and certain groups—I do not know what to call them—received weapons from the coup participants in Valencia. Could you give us your opinion?

[Perez] Well, Messrs. foreign journalists, I am quite pleased to be here before you. Venezuela recently became the center of the world's attention due to a deplorable, negative, and painful event. Many things have been reported by the media about the events that occurred in Venezuela. The events have been interpreted in many ways. Some of these interpretations have, unfortunately, been unfavorable to us. I have to admit that we are responsible for those unfavorable reports because many are the result of commentaries, debates, or reports issued within Venezuela as a result of our political debates and the media's comments.

You have come to Venezuela, you have lived here, and you have ascertained the absolute freedom that prevails in our country. You have also seen that this is not a country immersed in abject poverty. Within the realities of Latin America, this is a country that is overcoming its problems—solving, as much as possible given the current situation—the problems that afflict its most needy groups, the underprivileged groups, and it is exerting itself to the utmost to reach an advantageous position, to achieve economic development, and to attain our goal of improving the people's welfare. You know quite well that the industrialized world has a broad, positive opinion about Venezuela. Important foreign investments were recently made in our country, and a large amount of the capital taken abroad has been brought back to the country.

These brief introductory words are intended to let you know that our country and my government respects everyone's opinion, and that we deplore the fact that certain interpretations do not correspond to the reality that prevails in our country. We recognize that they are the result of the complaints and demands made—due to the negative attitude that prevails in our country—despite the reality that prevails in the country.

This coup...[pauses] this military plot was a surprise to the whole world. Everyone thought that Venezuela was the most stable democracy in the region. I want to tell you that it still is. The fact that this infamous attempt occurred does not change the reality about Venezuela's democracy. The manner in which it was violently and quickly defeated despite the unusual force employed, given the amount of weapons used by the groups that opposed our democratic system...[pauses] the situation was settled in two hours. This proves, first of all, that the Armed Forces of National Cooperation [FAC], remained faithful to the national government, the Constitution, and democracy. Second, it proves that the rebel action had no backing, no support.

The report that the action involved the participation of civilians has yet to be confirmed. We can say something that is quite true. This was a military, militarist, and fascist movement; it did not want the participation of civilians. It rejected political parties. It rejected economic groups. It rejected labor groups. Of course, we read in their declaration that civilians would be included in the government. The proclamation—which was not read on television channel 8 and was burned by the person who had it—surely included the names of some civilians who would be called upon to form the government. The plotters understood that it would not look good—at the international level—if only military officers appeared to be in charge. The central government, the central junta, the country's government would be in military hands, and there would be a head of state, a president—and he would be a military officer. The new government would include some civilians but...[pauses] there were many possibilities. Some Venezuelans who have always clinged to the country's history of dictatorships might agree with...[pauses] might be aware of the coup, but the movement was strictly military.

Another thing: There was no interest in having the country and the people learn about their ideas. During the early morning hours of 4 February, more than 100 radio stations and all the television stations that operate in Caracas and the rest of the country were available. Yet they did not even try to seize a radio station or television station, although they could have done it easily and freely to broadcast any message.

The message they had was supposed to be aired after removing me from Miraflores Palace, or after arresting me in Miraflores. The message was supposed to be read by the new fuhrer who was to take possession of the

national government. This is very important. They completely disregarded public opinion and feared the country's reaction to a coup attempt in Venezuela. They used the typical figure of the putsch to seize power by surprise and present themselves as the rulers of Venezuela.

It is not true that they found support and that they were able to deliver weapons to groups of civilians in the country. In Valencia, they tried to do it, but they did not have the support they claimed to have. What happened in Valencia was that they attacked an armory. They stole some weapons and some shotguns during the early morning hours, but they did not distribute weapons anywhere. Groups of rebels who fled left their weapons in certain areas. These were people who did not turn themselves in and abandoned their weapons.

[Moderator] Colleague Aldo Anfosi from Televisora Nacional de Chile continues.

[Anfosi] Good evening, Mr. President. Perhaps my question will come as a discrepancy with what you have recently said. I must say that, after questioning citizens on the street, we have found that many of them support the coupists. The reasons they gave us were basically two: first, the perception that corruption prevails in public administration, and second, they are unhappy with the current quality of life. Those ideas led them to wish for the success of the military movement. What is your comment in this regard?

[Perez] I do not doubt that you may have found people who are unhappy with the government and even people who may have wanted a coup. Do not forget that Venezuela has a long tradition of military coups. There is a fundamental observation I must make. If you look at the surveys that are conducted in the country, unfortunately in the city of Caracas there is a strong negative opinion. It is just the opposite in the interior of the country. I do not know why; perhaps it could be because of the strong political debates. Perhaps it is due to the exaggeration in the number of accusations made in the media, with all their strength and power concentrated in the capital. This has not caught me by surprise because, here in the city of Caracas, the surveys show the situation is different from that in the countryside.

In addition, in Venezuela we have lived through a much more harsh situation than what has been experienced in other Latin American countries. Venezuela has been a privileged country. Everything was subsidized in our country. Venezuelans never really felt the impact of a bad economic situation because subsidies encompassed all fundamental areas of the country. In addition, we had a currency that was worth more than foreign currencies. Our currency was worth more than the dollar. This situation led to cheaper products. Medicines sold in Venezuela were the cheapest in the world. They were even cheaper than in the countries in which they were produced because of the greater value of our currency. The economic reforms that have been implemented in our country have been extremely hard on the population. It was harder here than in Chile, Argentina, or Mexico, or any other country of the region. In comparison, our economic adjustment has been harder, but the social compensation system implemented by my government has been better than in other countries. We have 1.3 million families out of the 2.6 million families that comprise the Venezuelan population enjoying direct subsidies. They are getting food coupons and bonuses. This is not done by any other country in Latin America. We knew about our situation, and we knew that, fortunately, we had the possibility to implement some type of subsidy of this nature. Therefore, the poorest sectors in the country have had the direct support of the state, however, here the impact of the economic adjustments on the population has been much harder than in other countries.

For example, in the past a liter of gasoline cost four cents here. Today it costs eight cents. It is by far the cheapest gasoline in the world. It is much less than half the price of gasoline in the country where it is the next cheapest price. To increase the price of gasoline here in a small proportion is something really difficult. People do not want to accept having to pay not even one-fourth of what is paid where gasoline is the cheapest—an oil- producing country—for the price of gasoline. For example, an increase in the price of gasoline, in a timid, progressive, month-to-month manner, so that it will not cost over $25 per gallon... [pauses] over 25 cents per gallon has been a veritable trauma for the Venezuelan people. This will explain the situation to you—I am speaking very frankly because we are interested in having the truth, in being understood—because Venezuela's experience has been fundamental for Latin American democracy. Without any arrogance—if Venezuelan democracy had toppled, if this coup had succeeded, the entire democratic process we have secured over the past few years in Latin America would have been endangered. That was our great responsibility.

Today, when the foreign ministers of the Rio Group were present, the Argentine foreign minister spoke. This is how he began: We have triumphed. We were on the verge of being defeated. In other words, the destiny, the fate of democracy in Latin America was at stake here. That is why we want to be understood, so that it will be known what we are doing. In reality, there has been a tremendous scandal here regarding corruption. We Venezuelans are to blame, because the situation has been blown out of proportion. We all have problems of this sort in our countries. In Venezuela, we are making a big effort to overcome this. None of the scandals that were made known during my administration are from deals conducted under my administration. They stem from the past. They have been discovered by my government. This is the total truth. The scandals that have been discovered, however, undoubtedly contribute to the perception that there is a terrible process of corruption in Venezuela. I think we have a corruption problem.

Another thing: Laws have been approved to make things clearer. For example, although you may be amazed, in

Venezuela there was no law on bids. Large state transactions were conducted without being subjected to a law on bids. All transactions that have been conducted during the course of my administration have been subject to this law on bids. We have achieved important transformations to acquire better control of national life. Despite this, we had the Differential Exchange System scandal dealing with preferential dollars. None of that exists. Furthermore, the reasons, the pretexts, or possibilities of large corruption deals in the government have been eliminated, because the discretion of the Venezuelan state has ended.

These are specific actions. We are not saying that Venezuelans became better or worse overnight, or that previous governments were extremely corrupt and that the current one is extremely or basically honest. The main thing is that procedures have changed; some procedures have been improved and subjected to more controls. For example, in the past, import licenses or import permits offered possibilities for big deals. The delivery of preferential dollars was another way to make business. The lack of bids for public works also made that possible. This situation no longer exists in Venezuela. I am not saying that we have completely changed this reality in our country, but I can say that the situation is no longer the same. I must admit it is true that, at times, it would seem that the situation has not changed. Although this is not the case, there is an apparent situation that has been mentioned by the international press, which we regret. Venezuela has not yet overcome this situation, but there has been great improvement. My government's efforts to exercise controls on all activities is fundamental.

[Moderator] I invite colleague Manuel Enery of Sao Paulo's LA FOLA to come forward.

[Enery] Mr. President, you were a victim of a coup attempt that sought to eliminate democracy in Venezuela. Newspapers are currently under censorship. Is this not paradoxical, given that your government has also suspended constitutional guarantees?

[Perez] We must understand the situation. We have lived through a terrible commotion that seriously endangered public order. We are in the process of investigating the grave situation we faced. Therefore, the government suspended guarantees in accordance with the Constitution, and the decree suspending the guarantees was subject to the approval of the National Congress. It was approved with the vote of the main political parties in Venezuela. According to our Constitution, the government did not have to present the decree until 10 days after its promulgation. I presented it the same day it was issued, and it was almost unanimously approved. The main parties: Democratic Action Party, Social Christian Party, Movement Toward Socialism, and other smaller parties approved the decree suspending the guarantees, because it is necessary for the investigations that are taking place and in anticipation of problems that could result from the coup attempt. The suspension of guarantees will be very limited and will not last very long. It is an instrument established by the Constitution for situations of this nature.

[Moderator] We invite Stan Javros, from Los Angeles, United States of America.

[Javros] Good evening, Mr. President. Many people with whom we have talked have mentioned the measures implemented as part of the economic reforms. We have heard many complaints about those measures and about your economic plan. My question is: Will you adjust your plan in any way, or will it continue without any modifications?

[Perez] The measures are the same as the ones implemented in your country, and in Argentina, Mexico, Chile, Bolivia, and Peru. They are the same measures taken to adjust and to correct errors and [word indistinct] in all countries in the world who are facing situations similar to ours. The difference in our country is that contrary to other countries, we are establishing compensatory measures.

We will continue implementing the measures that have already shown results. I received the government with $300 million in international reserves. Today we have more than $13 billion in international reserves. I received the government with a deficit in our balance of payments of more than 5 billion bolivares. Today we have a surplus of more than 14 billion bolivares.

All the indicators... [pauses] our country's economic growth in 1991 was 9.2 percent, the highest in Latin America. These are official international figures, not figures obtained from unauthorized institutions in Venezuela or elsewhere. That is the reality. The increase in food consumption based on weight—because the increase could also be based on the increase in prices—in 1991 was 30 percent. In other words, all the indicators reflect a substantial change in the country's economic situation.

Unemployment dropped from 12 percent to 8 percent. This was reported as a front page feature by the NEW YORK TIMES, THE FINANCIAL TIMES, and other international newspapers that are important in financial circles. Consequently, there is a fortunate and extraordinary reactivation of the Venezuelan economy.

Electricity consumption tended to increase at a rate of 1.2 percent per year, but it only increased .92 percent last year. If you spent some time here, you would see a private electric company urge people not to consume energy, to turn off their lights, because electricity consumption had noticeably increased.

We have had foreign investments of approximately $10 billion this year. There are great investment projects. Consequently, economic reforms have resulted in important changes; but, like I said, the impact of the macroeconomic reforms was tremendous. The dollar's

exchange rate went from 4 bolivares to 60 bolivares, or 58 bolivares, in a country like ours that had so many imports. You must realize what this has represented for the normal Venezuelan citizen's life. The situation has been very difficult, but we had no other choice. We had to achieve these goals, and we are achieving them. This year will be different. This year we will achieve growth much more easily, and it will be more productive for the people in general.

For example, construction activities were practically paralyzed in 1989 and 1990. That resulted in mass dismissals, etc. The activities increased 30 percent in 1991, and this year we have a bonanza in construction activities—to the point that there is not enough manpower, and many of the construction materials will have to be imported because production had decreased considerably. We used to export cement in vast amounts, but the amount was reduced to a small amount in 1991—and this year it will probably disappear. Cement producers are now making plans to increase their production because they have no cement for export right now.

That is the situation we currently experience in Venezuela, but the macroeconomic benefits have yet to reach the lower classes, and we are currently working on that process. I also said that this was the most subsidized country in Latin America, and I mean the most subsidized by far, because we realized the problems this caused among the population. I am not unaware of those problems, and I feel for the population and I suffer for them, but we have to do this because the real welfare of our people is at stake.

[Moderator] THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

[Unidentified reporter] Good evening, Mr. President. I would like to know if you have plans to increase the budget for social projects and other projects without changing the economic measures structure.

[Perez] The truth is that THE WALL STREET JOURNAL is one of the newspapers that has published the news about the economic situation in Venezuelan in the most objective way. I could tell all the journalists that they should use this newspaper as their source, and we might add that it has no reason whatsoever to show sympathy for the political plan in Venezuela.

Very well, this is what we have been doing: My government's social policy is extremely important, and we have had resources from the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank to implement this policy. This year... [pauses] in my New Year's message, I announced a social megaproject that will spend $4 billion in four years—in addition to the normal and ordinary expenses included in our national budget for social projects. The project is intended to provide water, solve health problems, meet nutritional needs, and protect the children. The social megaproject is currently being implemented, and we have the resources to carry it out.

I want to tell you something else, and I hope my Latin American friends will forgive me. Venezuelan public services are among the best, if not the best, in Latin America—although we do not mean that they are very good, because we do not have very good public services in Latin America. Nevertheless, we have them and, for example, cholera has not become an epidemic in Venezuela. Every case we detect—all coming from abroad—is controlled. This also proves that we have an important health and disease prevention service in our country. We must undoubtedly tackle our social problems on a priority basis, and we are certainly doing it. This year, we will begin a large-scale program in this area. We are discussing it with the other political parties, and we have the necessary resources for those social programs.

[Moderator] Fernando Jauregui, Worldwide Television News, England, please approach the microphone.

[Jauregui] Good afternoon, Mr. President. As for the social programs that could be adversely affected by the country's budget deficit because of the decline in oil prices, do you not believe that this could create greater discontent than the discontent you have talked about this afternoonand could also adversely affect the megaprojects you have just talked about?

[Perez] This is another example of the confusion that is created because of the production of information. There is no fiscal deficit in Venezuela. When oil prices dropped, our budget had already been approved. We have just submitted a budget reform proposal to the National Congress in which we subtracted $4 from the price of an oil barrel. We also readjusted the entire budget. We made considerable reductions to our daily expenditures, but we also took advantage of the resources obtained from our privatizations, some $2 billion, for investment programs in the budget. In addition, we had created a macroeconomic reserve fund when oil prices were high, which would help us defend ourselves in case of a reduction in oil prices. In addition, most of the investment programs have the support of foreign credit. This credit comes from multinational organizations such as the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank. Therefore, there will be no budget deficit.

Investment programs contained in the budget will not be adversely affected because we are going to feed them with our privatization resources. We have credit from the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank for social megaprojects. Therefore, we have no problems. There was a great polemic over the deficit because of the way the newspapers handled the news. They said the decline in oil prices meant so many millions of bolivares. If no adjustments were made, they said there was going to be a budget deficit. If the budget was adjusted, then there would be no deficit. The news that was released abroad created a negative impression, even in the country. The question you are asking is also made by many Venezuelans. They ask how the deficit

will be covered. The fact is that there is no deficit. The deficit is resolved by adjusting budget revenues and expenditures.

[Moderator] We are now going to give a Latin American colleague an opportunity. Daniel Freitas from the LA MANANA newspaper of Uruguay.

[Freitas] Good evening, Mr. President. There has been lots of talk about protests on the streets. The people talk about the worker and student protests, and there is also talk about unhappiness in the Armed Forces. This led to the uprising on 4 February. Are you going to make some changes to your socioeconomic policies in view of requests made by opposition political parties in Venezuela?

[Perez] We had a large number of student protests last year because they were led to think—this is a product of internal struggles—that Venezuela was going to privatize its educational system. They listened to that falsehood. This led to a series of student protests that were encouraged by certain other groups. A painful incident occurred in which the government has had to accept its responsibility. In some of those demonstrations—which had some very limited traces of violence—three students were killed. This was unjustifiable. This led to more student protests. I immediately recognized the situation. Those who were responsible for these incidents have been put in jail, and they are standing trial.

These were unfortunate situations that often take place in our countries. This led to an increase in the student protests. We do not have demonstrations staged by the unemployed, we do not have demonstrations by people asking for food. Nothing of this sort takes place in the country. There are strikes here as in other countries, among other reasons because collective bargaining contracts were signed too often. Since we had an abundant supply of oil money in the past, commitments of all kinds were made. All of a sudden, some labor unions found out that there is a 1980 agreement that has not been fulfilled yet and, therefore, they are demanding that the government honor it. We had to sit down to negotiate, and a strike ensued.

There is no doubt that with these reforms, with these adjustments, we have also seen problems with wages and the cost of living. This is a constant situation that we have on our hands. Workers are constantly demanding solutions from the government. We cannot create a situation of full equilibrium in this matter overnight.

This causes protests and strikes, which also occur in the countries you represent. There is no social instability.

There is another problem that worries Venezuelans a lot: personal insecurity. As a result of the situation of poverty in the country, crime has increased considerably. This is a very serious problem, and naturally it is one of the problems that causes more protests and discontent in the community. As the situation improved in our country, we have also improved security services. I believe that we will be able to offer services more in accordance with the people's demands this year. This has been one of the most irritating problems, particularly in large cities, because this is not a serious problem in small cities. In the capital city, this is one of the problems that causes more irritation and that provokes more reactions against the government. I am sure that to the extent that we correct this situation, the positions will also change. I am very frank in saying this, as I believe we cannot hide anything. We know what is happening in each one of our countries.

In regard to the Armed Forces, there have been constant pay raises. My two governments have been characterized by implementing more social reforms in the Armed Forces. We began an overall social security plan for the Armed Forces last year that helped to solve their problems. This social plan will end this year. Salaries have been increased, as well as all the benefits they receive from the state. Therefore, fortunately this is not a specific reason for discontent in the Armed Forces. Moreover, this plan is being implemented systematically.

[Moderator] We will end this great news conference with a female reporter: Gloria Salo, of Spain's Telecinco.

[Salo] Good evening. Despite all the services and facilities you claim to be giving to the Venezuelan people, your popularity seems to be low. You seem to be very worried about foreign policy and your image abroad. In a way, could you be identified with Gorbachev, a political leader who outside his country even received the Nobel Peace Prize, but is very unpopular domestically?

[Perez] Well, if I identified myself with Gorbachev, I would not be here in the Presidency. I would have resigned on 4 February. [he laughs] No, really, I recognize it would be impossible to make the economic adjustments that must be made in Venezuela without accepting a dose of unpopularity. This is part of the responsibility of a leader toward his country, which I have fully assimilated. Fortunately, I have been able to assimilate it due to the broad popularity I have in Venezuela. Therefore, I still have a lot to offer.

[Unidentified reporter] Good evening, Mr. President, thank you. There is a legitimate concern among some Venezuelan groups and also abroad, because the $10 billion in foreign investments you announced could be reduced. What guarantees do you and your government offer to foreign investors so that they may return to Venezuela?

[Perez] Yes, indeed, this is the important thing. Venezuela gives foreign capital the same treatment it gives to Venezuelan capital. The possibilities and infrastructure that exist in Venezuela attract foreign capital. For example, Venezuela offers abundant and relatively cheap electric energy because it is hydroelectric energy, meaning that that is generated by our country's water resources. Likewise, we have an incredibly large amount of natural resources. We have abundant bauxite and

aluminum. We have abundant iron. We currently have foreign investments in excess of $3 billion in the construction of new petrochemical plants, and the country's security is guaranteed.

We recently had an event that caused great expectation and great commotion. We held a bid for 40 percent of the shares of our country's telecommunications company. We established a basic price of $800 million for that 400 [figure as heard] percent. The leading consortiums in the world participated—from Europe, the United States, Japan, etc.—and what had been offered for $800 million was sold for $2 billion. This really shook the financial world. The reason... [pauses] a U.S. consortium, GTE, won the bid. Why? Because, it said Venezuela offers security for investments because risks are limited in Venezuela. This is clear evidence of what is happening in Venezuela concerning foreign investments.

Well, gentlemen, thank you. I hope that I was able to satisfy your desire to obtain information. As far as I am concerned, any time you want to come to Venezuela, you will find that the doors of Miraflores Palace are open so you may get the interviews you want with the president of the Republic. Good evening, and see you soon.

Perez Praises Latin American 'Unity in Democracy'

PA0902024292 Caracas Venezolana de Television Network in Spanish 0000 GMT 9 Feb 92

[Text] Attacking Venezuelan democracy is attacking the democracy of all Latin American countries, because our people are fully aware of this fact and practice political self-determination. Presidents can only reach power through direct elections.

This was the final conclusion reached by the Rio Group foreign ministers who came to Venezuela to sign the Declaration of Caracas, in which they expressed their full support to President Carlos Andres Perez and the system chosen by the Venezuelan people.

[Begin Perez recording] This was not an attack against the Venezuelan democracy, it was an aggression against Latin American democracy. Fortunately, though, what we must praise or highlight today is that Latin America is no longer divided, and that each one of our countries is not alone. We are a region where unity and integration have consolidated. Although we have not yet created an area of common trade or established unified customs tariffs, we have already achieved essential and fundamental unity: unity in democracy. Governments of force are no longer possible in Latin America. The Armed Forces and police in our countries are complying with their mission, and they are doing this because they received the unanimous mandate from the society in each one of our countries and from Latin American society in general. [end recording]

Government Denounces 'Disinformation' Campaign

PA0702203492 Paris AFP in Spanish 1755 GMT 7 Feb 92

[Text] Caracas, 7 Feb (AFP)—The Venezuelan Government has denounced a "campaign of disinformation and rumors" that is harmful to the development of the country and has asked the media to cooperate so that confidence and tranquillity will prevail. Otherwise, the government warned it will have to apply severe penalties.

The Central Information Office (OCI) issued a communique on Thursday night, 6 February, containing a "cordial but strong appeal to the media, so that their exemplary conduct will contribute to the tranquillity and confidence needed by the citizens ... or otherwise severe sanctions will be applied, as contemplated within the country's constitutional framework."

On 4 February, after the thwarted coup d'etat against Carlos Andres Perez, the government suspended constitutional guarantees for 10 days (freedom of expression, of association, inviolability of the home, and freedom of transit).

Deputy Oscar Yanes, president of the Permanent Media Commission of the congressional Chamber of Deputies, criticized on 7 February the 6 February raid on ZETA magazine, the request for "discretion in information" made to Cadena Radio Rumbos, and OCI warnings to the media to restrict information, alleging the suspension of constitutional guarantees.

The deputy agreed the suspension of guarantees will allow the government to reestablish normalcy and to conduct operations leading to a fair and objective investigation. He believes, however, that this does not justify "vulgar vengeance or reprisals by the regime, taking advantage of the constitutional situation."

Jurate Rosales, director of ZETA magazine, told AFP they are still waiting for the Interior Ministry to advise them of the reason for the raid on the magazine publishing house and seizure of the editions.

According to officials of the DISIP [Directorate of Intelligence and Prevention Services], the political police that staged the raid, the magazine cover with a photograph of Lieutenant Colonel Hugo Chavez, who headed the coup, was subversive.

Rosales argued that the photograph was taken at a news conference called by the government and aired to the country on television, including the state channel. Photographs of Chavez had also been printed in virtually all newspapers in the country.

Rafael Poleo, editor of ZETA and of EL NUEVO PAIS newspaper, has been out of the country since a warrant was issued for his arrest for illegal possession of weapons. The arrest warrant was part of an investigation

of robbery at his home during which documents he had compiled on Armed Forces corruption were stolen.

The journalist and editor said the submachine gun seized from him had been given to him years ago by the DISIP chief for his own protection. He said the arrest warrant was intended to silence him.

Newspaper, Magazine 'Confiscated'

PA0702203092 Paris AFP in Spanish 1747 GMT 7 Feb 92

[Text] Caracas, 7 Feb (AFP)—Alberto Nolia, alternate AFP director, has reported to AFP over the telephone that on 7 February, members of the political police and the militarized National Guard confiscated copies of the opposition newspaper EL NUEVO PAIS in Caracas and other cities.

Nolia, who called the AFP editor at 1550 GMT (1250 local time), said that the confiscation took place at street stalls in Caracas, Valencia, Barquisimeto, Coro, and Maracaibo. Nolia said that he is trying to contact officials of the Ministry of the Interior and the press office at the presidential building to learn the reasons for the seizure, but he got no satisfactory answer. AFP also asked whether the Ministry of the Interior would make an announcement on the matter. An official replied: "Not for the time being."

On 6 February, 10 heavily armed members of the Directorate of Intelligence and Prevention Services [DISIP], the political police, raided the facilities of ZETA magazine, where EL NUEVO PAIS and the magazine AUTENTICO are also published. EL NUEVO PAIS reported that the police could not confiscate ZETA's entire issue because 92 percent of it was already in readers' hands.

The three publications are edited by Rafael Poleo, a social democrat like Carlos Andres Perez, but one who flatly opposes him. Poleo now writes articles from New York, after an arrest warrant was issued against him on military weapons possession charges. The warrant followed a confusing raid on Poleo's home on 21 June 1991 by security agents, one of whom died later at the Military Intelligence Directorate installations.

One preliminary arrest warrant was issued against the agents. The second warrant, however, holds Poleo responsible for the possession of weapons when the police reportedly found a submachine gun that a former DISIP director had given him during the government of Luis Herrera Campins, former Christian Democratic president who governed the country from 1979 to 1984.

Poleo reported this situation during the most recent Inter- American Press Association meeting in Sao Paulo, Brazil.

Rafael Caldera, former Christian Democratic president from 1969 to 1974, said: "It is very regrettable that these excesses—which entail the suspension of personal rights, including freedom of the press—were committed only a few days after the thwarted military coup of 4 February."

These criticisms were also expressed by Paulina Gamos, Social Democratic deputy; Jose Vicente Rangel, journalist and former presidential candidate; and Oscar Yanes, Christian Democratic deputy and president of the Permanent Media Committee of the Chamber of Deputies.

Yanes pointed out: "The government cannot remain blind and deaf to our reality. Threats on the media, confiscation of publications, and raids of newspaper offices are not the best actions if there is a genuine desire to strengthen democracy in Venezuela."

Ministry Censors Publications

PA0902000492 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 1636 GMT 8 Feb 92

[Text] Caracas, 8 Feb (NOTIMEX)—In the early hours of 8 February, Interior Affairs Ministry (MRI) officials censored the edition of a magazine and a newspaper and inspected another one, witnesses and journalistic sources have reported. This is the third time this week that authorities have raided the offices of media sources, within the framework of the suspension of constitutional guarantees implemented on 4 February following the aborted military coup.

The measure mainly affected DIARIO DE CARACAS that was publishing, since 6 February, an extensive photo report entitled "The Day Democracy Trembled," in reference to the insurrection. MRI officials and agents of the Directorate of Intelligence and Prevention Services (DISIP, political police) confiscated "some supplements" according to a journalist from that daily.

The MRI officials asked Diego Bautista, director of DIARIO DE CARACAS, to eliminate the special reportage, arguing that the media has elevated the image of the coup leader, Lieutenant Colonel Hugo Chavez. On 6 February, DISIP banned an edition of the ZETA magazine after the MRI decided that the publication of Chavez' photograph on the cover was inappropriate. In addition, the edition of the daily EL NUEVO PAIS—associated with the magazine—was withdrawn from newspaper stands on 7 February.

In the same manner, MRI actions carried out early on 8 February affected the ELITE magazine, associated with the daily ULTIMAS NOTICIAS, because it contained information on the coup. The daily EL NACIONAL, strongly opposed to the government of President Carlos Andres Perez, also was raided by DISIP and MRI agents, who inspected the installations and the 8 February edition.

Perez: 'No Actions' Against Media

PA0902000792 Paris AFP in Spanish 2116 GMT 8 Feb 92

[Text] Caracas, 8 Feb (AFP)—On 8 February, President Carlos Andres Perez denied that Venezuelan newspapers have been removed from circulation and stated that, in accordance with the suspension of constitutional guarantees, the media has been advised to be cautious in publishing or broadcasting inadvisable news.

The political police confiscated the ELITE magazine on the night of 7 February and ordered a delay in the publishing of a special supplement of the DIARIO DE CARACAS newspaper that covered the 4 February military coup attempt, owners of the newspaper have reported. An edition of EL NACIONAL newspaper was delayed, and an official is inspecting material from EL UNIVERSAL newspaper, according to reports provided by these media.

On 6 February, there were attempts to confiscate the ZETA magazine; however, practically all copies had been sold. On 7 February, copies of the EL NUEVO PAIS newspaper were confiscated, according to their publishers.

Perez said that the measures to control inappropriate information "are a security strategy aimed at stabilizing the public order situation that was disrupted by the 4 February events; therefore, no actions have been taken against the media."

As for the arrest of retired General Jacobo Yepez Daza, president of the Association of Retired Military Officers, which released a communique critical of the system, the president said: "These are public security problems being handled by the police because one must not forget that, three days ago, my life was in danger and democracy was about to disappear."

The president made these statements after signing an agreement between the Caracas Governorship and the Private Security Association, through which the latter will become assistants to the police. During the ceremony, the president called for the "permanent elimination" of the "existing dichotomy between the government and citizens."

The president reiterated, when recalling the military coup attempt, that "citizens will never accept (the coupists) and will always will reject them. The forces of dictatorships are the armed groups, and those of democracy are its citizens. We must never forget that," he said.

Retired Officers Criticize Perez Government

PA0802233792 Paris AFP in Spanish 2110 GMT 8 Feb 92

[Text] Caracas, 8 Feb (AFP)—On the night of 7 February, security agents arrested retired General Jacobo Yepez Daza, president of the Armed Forces Institute of Retired Officers, that published a communique that same day criticizing the flaws of Venezuelan democracy, the general's wife reported.

The document, which was signed by more than 50 retired officers, including 15 generals and two vice admirals, deplored the 4 February aborted coup headed by lieutenant colonels. In analyzing its causes, the document said: "The national government, in its three branches, has violated constitutional laws on which the Venezuelan democratic system is based."

Itala Martinez, Gen. Yepez' wife, said that a dozen soldiers arrived at his residence, located in the neighborhood of Bello Monte in Caracas, and said that "the president of the Republic had ordered Yepez Daza's arrest."

The agents were told that Yepez was at a farm in the eastern Anzoategui State. On the night of 7 February, his relatives reported that he was arrested by agents of the Directorate of Intelligence and Prevention Services (DISIP).

In a polemic communique, the retired officers stressed that "The executive branch has shown a consistent incapacity, not only in giving our people the minimum well-being they demand, but also in its reckless defense of the country's vital interests in the Gulf of Venezuela (where the delimitation of marine and submarine areas with Colombia is pending)."

"The members of the legislative branch have not interpreted faithfully and effectively the actual needs of the people who elected them, and the Judicial Branch has been characterized by administering 'injustice' in the name of equity, thus frustrating the expectations of people who demand order and justice," the communique added.

The document, which was published as paid advertisements in the press, stated that consequently, "It is obvious that the real causes that led to the recent incidents lay in the incapacity of the political leadership in fighting corruption, safeguarding the security of people and property, making public services more efficient, and guaranteeing order and equality for all."

The retired officers specifically criticized the past four democratic governments: The first one headed by Carlos Andres Perez, a Social Democrat, (1974-1979), and the others by Luis Herrera Campins, a Christian Democrat (1979-1984); Jaime Lusinchi, a Social Democrat (1984-1989); and the current government headed by Perez.

They said that the official charges against the officers involved in the coup—who were called "criminals," "ambitious people," and "traitors to the homeland"—create criminal figures and legal- political interpretations that do not really show what actually happened.

President Perez accuses the military involved in the coup of trying to assassinate him, and he called them "fascists." The retired military officers requested respect for

the physical safety of retired officers and asked that no retaliatory measures be taken against their families. Commenting on the last request, Defense Minister Fernando Ochoa Antich stated that they know him "and they know very well that appropriate treatment is given to prisoners in Venezuelan democracy."

Ochoa terms as "grave," "unwarranted," and "inappropriate" the document issued by retired military officers. He said that 131 officers have been arrested in connection with the rebellion (the first official reports indicate 135 were arrested), and approximately 1,000 troop members are being investigated in their respective units.

When journalists asked him if the rebels asked him to assume command at any moment, he answered: We "held some talks when they felt defeated; they made some suggestions, and I used a phrase that I consider appropriate to repeat: A man of honor cannot possibly talk about those things."

He also criticized, in military terms, rebel leader Hugo Chavez, who, he said, "had the military means and was entrenched here in the Military Museum close to Miraflores Palace with more than 250 men armed with antitank weapons; yet, he let his subalterns fight it out here in Miraflores without giving them any support."

The minister confirmed that military trials have begun against the rebels, and the official news agency, VENPRES, reported that a summary trial had begun in Maracaibo, 700 km northwest of Caracas, against 27 arrested officers and NCOs [non-commissioned officers].

The rebels operated in Caracas, Maracaibo, and the cities of Maracay and Valencia.

Defense Minister Says Coup Participants Released

PA0802011692 Caracas Venezolana de Television Network in Spanish 0000 GMT 8 Feb 92

[Text] Defense Minister Division General Fernando Ochoa Antich has reported that the troops involved in the rebellion have been released. The defense minister said that, nevertheless, the military are still being investigated. The minister also said he does not know why a communique was issued by retired generals requesting that the arrested be treated well.

[Begin Ochoa recording] I wish to clearly state that I do not understand why the document was issued, because the officers who signed the document—if all of them signed it, because we do not know yet—know me very well, and they know that, within Venezuela's democracy, the prisoners will be treated appropriately. [end recording]

General Praises FAC Actions to 'Crush' Coup

PA0802013192 Caracas Venezolana de Television Network in Spanish 0016 GMT 8 Feb 92

[Text] General Fredis Ventura Maya Cardona, commander general of the Armed Forces of National Cooperation [FAC], has stated clearly that he never said members of his force were involved in the aborted coup d'etat. He added that, quite to the contrary, he congratulated his men for their active participation in the actions to crush it.

[Begin Maya recording] One: The FAC commander general has never stated what has been attributed to him in certain reports. Quite the contrary, he expressed his pride and satisfaction with the total and active participation of all FAC members in the actions carried out to defeat the rebels.

Two: The FAC has always acted in defense of the democratic system, and it has proven its determined and efficient endeavor to defend the legally appointed authorities on the occasion of the fateful event that occurred on 4 February, .

AFP: Coup Leader Denies Plan To Kill Perez

PA0802023892 Paris AFP in Spanish 0155 GMT 8 Feb 92

[Text] Caracas, 7 Feb (AFP)—Lieutenant Colonel Hugo Chavez Frias, who headed a coup attempt on 4 February, has denied that he sought to assassinate President Carlos Andres Perez. He said this during a telephone interview reported by the local INNAC news agency.

During the interview, Chavez Frias denied that he had planned to establish a "fascist" government, as the president himself had claimed. He said that, had the action been successful, the soldiers involved would have installed a civic-military government.

The rebellious soldier said that "The assassination of the president was never planned." Chavez Frias added that the coup attempt "sought to give the country a better life and overcome the crisis it faces."

Young officers launched a coup attempt between the late hours of 3 February and 4 February in a bid to assassinate him, President Perez said. However, some political leaders and retired soldiers doubt this claim. General Alberto Muller Rojas said: "We must realize that the insurgents' attacks were aimed at people and not positions." Muller Rojas pointed out that "the kind of military actions used to carry out assassinations are called 'commando' actions, and they were not used in this case."

It is not known where Chavez Frias is being kept under arrest, but certain sources said that he could be at the San Carlos Garrison or at the headquarters of the Military Intelligence Directorate, both in Caracas.

Ruling Party Leader Says Another Coup Possible

PA0702230492 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1713 GMT 7 Feb 92

[Text] Caracas, 7 Feb (EFE)—Humberto Celli, president of the ruling Democratic Action (AD) Party, said on 7 February that the possibility of another coup d'etat attempt in Venezuela, similar to the one of 4 February, cannot be dismissed. Celli admitted that there is great discontent in Venezuela. He said that this will likely be expressed in the upcoming December mayoral and governor elections, and in the 1993 presidential elections.

Celli's statements coincided with a manifesto published in all Caracas newspapers on 7 February. The manifesto, signed by 19 generals, four rear admirals, 25 colonels, and other military officers of lesser rank—all of them retired—attributed the coup attempt to the "violation of constitutional principles on the part of the national government."

The retired military officers said that the executive branch demonstrated its inconsistencies and its lack of ability by not giving the people the minimum social welfare they demand. This also was demonstrated by the "negligence" shown in defending the nation's vital interests in the Gulf of Venezuela and in border negotiations with Colombia.

The retired military officers claim that members of the legislative branch have not interpreted accurately the real aspirations of the people who elected them. In addition, they said that the legislative branch has administered "injustice" in the name of fairness.

In the manifesto, the retired soldiers noted that accusing the group that attempted the coup d'etat of being "bandits, ambitious, and traitors to the fatherland" is "shameful and denigrating" for the military officers. They emphasized that, "to make amends," the political leadership should recognize the rebels' actions were "the result of the incompetence that our political leaders have shown in the last four periods of government."

Celli said that he is surprised by the tendency to "turn the villain into a hero." He noted that, when speaking about dictatorships and democracy, "it is important to emphasize democracy's shortcomings," and announced that, when the situation returns to normal, he will call for a national debate to solve the system's problems. Celli said that his party supports enlarging the government's political base in order to strengthen the unity and support that President Carlos Andres Perez received from all the political parties on the day of the attempted coup d'etat.

The AD leaders are considering the possibility of incorporating leaders from opposition parties such as COPEI [Social Christian Party] and Movement Toward Socialism, or from the private sector, into the executive branch.

Venezuelan writer Arturo Uslar Pietri, winner of the "Prince of Asturias" prize in 1990, said in an article published on 7 February in the Caracas daily EL NACIONAL that the current situation demands from the government and political parties a reevaluation and an in-depth analysis of how the democratic system has functioned recently.

Uslar Pietri said that the coup attempt should not be viewed as an "unsuccessful military insurrection." He said that it was not an isolated case caused by the discontent or ambition of a group of military men, but mirrors the general discontent in Venezuela. That discontent is due to a number of reasons that are accumulating and have no apparent solution.

* New Interior Minister Views Crime, Unrest

92SM0235A Caracas EL NACIONAL in Spanish 19 Jan 92 Section D p 2

[Interview with Interior Minister Virgilio Avila Vivas by members of EL NACIONAL's editorial staff; place and date not given; first paragraph is EL NACIONAL introduction]

[Text] The new minister of the interior offers a policy of ongoing dialogue and open doors to seek mutually agreed upon solutions for the nation's problems. His top priority, which he believes reflects the feelings of all Venezuelans, will be to combat crime. On the controversial Decree 1.911 granting Venezuelan citizenship to children of undocumented aliens, he says it is legal, although he prefers to await the Supreme Court decision.

He is responsible for the citizens' security; for combatting the drug traffic and the kidnapping industry; ensuring public order from disturbances and dealing with the problem of undocumented aliens. He also has to deal in the best (and most impartial) way possible with mayors and governors, even when elections and campaigns are approaching which may in some way worsen problems. He will probably have to take charge of the presidency several times during the next few months (though he says that does not keep him awake at night). In addition, he wants to act as a sort of fire extinguisher; he proposes to be the government's great conciliator. He seems to be man of balance, one who will talk before using force. Virgilio Avila Vivas, the new interior minister, says that to achieve all this he will apply something he learned from President Perez: to work longer hours.

"I took on this responsibility with a desire to serve; I hope I will not betray the immense responsibility and trust the president has placed in me. We are ready for dialogue and to set to work with both our hands, the right and the left. And to work as a team."

Perhaps to give an indication of this he was accompanied by the director of the Diex [Alien Affairs Division], Rafael Rodriguez Merida, and of the Disip [Directorate of Intelligence and Prevention Services], General Manuel Antonio Heinz Azpurua, in his conversation

with this paper's editorial staff. Taking part in this conversation were the director of EL NACIONAL Alfredo Pena; Argenis Martinez, head of editorial planning; William Becerra, director of political news; and Alba Sanchez, head of editorial reporting.

To give another indication of what dialogue will mean during his tenure, he announced that in addition to his visits to the media, tomorrow he will begin talks with political groups. In the morning he will meet with the national leadership of COPEI [Social Christian Party], and in the afternoon, with the leaders of MAS [Movement Toward Socialism], to listen to their ideas and suggestions.

"I believe that by putting our ideas together we may learn things that will help to solve problems of concern to absolutely all of us—for example, in the anti-crime program, for which we all share some responsibility. I have had a great response. There is good support, and willingness on the part of political groups. Next week I am going to visit Fedecamaras [Venezuelan Federation of Associations nad Chambers of Commerce and Industry] and Consecomercio [National Council of Commerce and Services] to listen to their suggestions and ideas, and we are going to meet with some neighborhood associations. Fighting crime requires us to be alert and ready 24 hours a day. I am not going to relax in my efforts or lower my guard, and I am sure all the police forces are committed to winning a definite victory, by fair means, over the problem of crime in Venezuela."

Security, the Top Priority

He says the ministry of the interior's top priority is to deal with the problem of lack of security which is distressing and burdening all the Venezuelan people.

"We are certain that this must be a joint effort among all public and private sector organizations and communities. The participation of civilian society is essential if we are to take united action against crime. We do have some very important experiences to point out. For example, what we have done together with the Metropolitan Police and the residents in Barrio Las Erasos, in Catia La Mar, with the people's active involvement in manning police stations. And also programs like those in the states of Lara, Zulia, Carabobo, Aragua, and Bolivar. We are using these experiences to support and enrich the general plan for the entire nation which the National Police Command has drafted. We are not offering to solve the problem of crime once and for all; we must be realistic and honest about this. It is important to deal with it with dedication, determination, and the absolute cooperation of everyone."

He announced that in the next few days they are going to put 240 patrol cars out on the streets, 100 acquired by the interior ministry through Disip, and 140 which the DF [Federal District] government acquired six months ago for the Metropolitan Police and the Urban Security Command of the National Guard. Moreover, in the National Police Council held last Sunday, it was agreed to act on all road corridors of the metropolitan area, including the sections of Sucre and Baruta in Miranda state.

"The people want a more active police presence. What is important is prevention and intelligence. We are working in that direction, and I am sure that very soon we will begin to obtain results which will make the Venezulean people feel more protected, and they will see a greater police presence. I believe this is the way to achieve optimum results, for the crime problem can not be solved only by immediate, high publicity measures of a psychological nature. Those are important, but the crime problem also requires mid and long-term programs. I am sure that with our strong determination and interest, we will be able to provide the community with the greater protection and tranquility that the people want. We are not going to relax in our efforts to achieve those objectives, which are a top priority for the government of President Carlos Andres Perez."

[EL NACIONAL] There is a fairly negative psychological state. People are being attacked in cemeteries and on buses. Criminals no longer stop at robbery; now robberies with murders are on the increase.

[Avila Vivas] That is why we are giving unrestricted support to all our police, to the Disip, the PTJ [Judicial Technical Police], the Metropolitan Police and the National Guard, so that the police the nation wants will be able to handle the new situation.

[EL NACIONAL] The possibility has been raised that private security businesses might cooperate directly with the police on the street.

[Avila Vivas] As I said, in dealing with the crime problem, all of us absolutely have to work together—civilian society, and both public and private institutions.

[EL NACIONAL] Asking for this cooperation amounts to a sort of explicit admission that the state has failed in its role of ensuring the people's security. The people have had to resort to private security companies and to arm themselves....

[Avila Vivas] The state has not failed in this.

[EL NACIONAL] But look at what we are going through.

[Avila Vivas] This is a difficult effort and we are ready to deal with it honestly, but the analysis must be completely impartial. The important thing is having cooperation and help from everyone to achieve a goal so greatly desired by the community. The police were organized for another Venezuela. We have had to modernize our police, not only from the standpoint of their structure, but also taking into consideration the man, the officer, improving their living conditions and salaries. This is a process, and we cannot work miracles. But I am sure that very soon we will start to see results. The program of police stations in the Federal District, designed by the president of the republic, has begun to produce results. The old concept of keeping the police isolated in their

barracks is over. Now there are 93 interconnected stations ready to respond to the citizens and eager to work with neighborhood associations, because no anticrime policy will work if it does not have the participation and cooperation of civilian society.

[EL NACIONAL] Are you thinking of arming the people?

[Avila Vivas] That has not been discussed.

[EL NACIONAL] Cynics say that stations have been built and patrol cars purchased, but there are still no police. Things are just the same.

[Avila Vivas] The special circumstances which Venezuelan society is experiencing, a severe social and economic crisis, have had an impact on crime rates, while nothing has been done for the police forces. Venezuela's police have been a marginal force; society has ignored them. When we try to get greater police presence we want to improvise and get a major police presence overnight. But a police force cannot be improvised. It must be constructed little by little, the seeds must be planted, and it certainly has to be paid. I believe that the media, and here I earnestly plead for your support, must take part in this great crusade to improve the police. We now have 1,800 police vacancies in Caracas, because we have done absolutely nothing to upgrade the image of the police force, to promote or stimulate it or to convince ourselves that it is an important career. When I came to the DF government, a policeman earned 4,500 bolivars. Today they earn 15,000 and they have life insurance, hospitalization, medical and maternity care for the policeman and his family. The policeman risks his life 24 hours a day; we have to give him security and tranquility. When little boys do not want to go to school, we hear people say "this boy is not even good enough to be a policeman." There is a stigma attached to police work which we must overcome. No one wants to be a uniformed policeman. We have to overcome that. The media must help to improve the image of the police.

[EL NACIONAL] Why not use the bodyguards in the police force?

[Avila Vivas] The problem of the bodyguards has been greatly exaggerated.

[EL NACIONAL] In Venezuela anyone who is ever considered a "personality" has bodyguards. There are officials and ex-officials who have a permanent guard staff with 20 and even up to 40 people in their service.

[Avila Vivas] They are being cut to a minimum. I must say that from the start of his administration, the president's instructions about reducing bodyguards to a minimum have been clear. That is being done.

[EL NACIONAL] How many bodyguards are there in Venezuela?

[Avila Vivas] They have been reduced to a minimum. Here the head of the Disip gave a number: 700.

[EL NACIONAL] Every former president has 50. Combined, they have more bodyguards than the Petare police force.

[Avila Vivas] We are ready to do what will help everyone, including reducing the number of bodyguards. We are willing, and we do take suggestions. The issue of crime and its possible solutions is as inexhaustible as our determination to solve it. I am offering to work 24 hours a day to satisfy the needs of the Venezuelan community. But we have to state the problem correctly. I have faith that the media will help us.

[EL NACIONAL] You do not believe that as long as the economic situation is worsening, not even the best police force in the world can combat crime?

[Avila Vivas] The crisis has obviously had an impact, but the economic situation is improving because of the measures the government has imposed and the president's firmness in implementing his economic policy. We will soon see its results. Thanks to these policies, we have not taken the route of the southern cone nations.

Undocumented Aliens

[EL NACIONAL] But people from the south and west are still coming to Venezuela, and the problem of undocumented aliens and of the lack of an immigration policy is extremely serious.

[Avila Vivas] All border countries have this problem. The United States, the most highly developed nation in the world, has it. Venezuela is a big, generous nation which has always had an open door, good neighbor policy. Venezuela has been strengthening its borders to benefit the nation. Certainly, there are risks entailed, but we are working to overcome them. The Diex has done a magnificent job and has begun a process of "cleaning house" and training.

[EL NACIONAL] How are you going to solve the problem created by Decree 1.911?

[Avila Vivas] Under our current laws, any citizen may present a child at a Civil Registry Office with the certificate issued by the hospital where the child was born. That is a requirement. Doctor Escovar Salom, who was my Constitutional Law professor, taught me that under "jus soli" [determination of nationality based on place of birth], everyone born in Venezuelan territory has Venezuelan citizenship.

[EL NACIONAL] But the discussion is what an undocumented alien can present, someone whose residence in Venezulean is illegal.

[Avila Vivas] The father or mother does not necessarily have to appear.

[EL NACIONAL] Then this is going to become a business.

[Avila Vivas] We can not look at it that way. The law is the law. We do have a deportation policy here, which is another matter. Problems arise for us and for all countries; people leave and other people come in, because our borders are very extensive. In any case, the law must be obeyed. I am not going to debate this issue, as I am a man who seeks reconciliation. The president considers this controversy settled, and I am not going to continue it. The Supreme Court will have to rule on this issue. I do believe this is a defined, correct and legally well founded policy, a humane policy.

The Diex director spoke up at this point, saying that they are taking steps to modify the Immigration Law, which dates from 1937, when Venezuela was quite a different place. Next Thursday there will be a meeting at the foreign ministry, attended by specialists from the interior ministry, Diex, and the foreign ministry, to consider urgent revisions for the immigration reform bill. Agreements will also be reached between the Diex and the GN [National Guard] in border areas.

Troublemakers Have Been Identified

[EL NACIONAL] Classes have resumed, and so have the disorders. It seems this is going to continue.

[Avila Vivas] I hope you are wrong. We have begun talks with student groups and with all of the educational community. I think their struggles and protests are legitimate, but they must remain within certain bounds; otherwise, chaos would result. The vast majority of the students want to concentrate on their studies, but legal protest is being used by a few infiltrators who have nothing to do with this struggle, who want to stir up trouble in the community. This causes young people to waste their time when they should be preparing for their future, for the nation's destiny will soon be in their hands.

[EL NACIONAL] Has the presence of subversion or of organized groups been confirmed?

[Avila Vivas] No. These are isolated cases with no organic unity, elements which at times take advantage of circumstances to try to create unrest.

[EL NACIONAL] Who are these groups, from whom do they take orders?

[Avila Vivas] They are anarchist groups operating in Venezuela.

[EL NACIONAL] Have they been fully identified?

[Avila Vivas] Yes, completely, because they are small groups which are easy to identify.

[EL NACIONAL] So why are they not in jail?

[Avila Vivas] We wanted to reconcile them, work with them. We have been talking, listening to suggestions. Some of them are now ready to help promote peace in educational centers.

[EL NACIONAL] Some riots arise in response to specific problems, and do not fall within the authority of the interior minister. For example, demonstrations about transportation, about water shortages, or any other defective service. In those cases you can only use dialogue or force.

[Avila Vivas] Dialogue comes first. I am trying to act as a coordinator of these services, bringing together officials to seek solutions, being in contact with service organizations, with other ministers. Rather than acting through the police, we have to try to bring people together and talk—with students, teachers, residents, and that is what I am ready to do. I think it is the best contribution I can make at this time.

Kidnapping and Drug Industries

[EL NACIONAL] What do you intend to do about the terrible problem along our borders and the industries of kidnapping, rustling and robbery?

[Avila Vivas] We are prepared to deal with this problem decisively and with determination. Just a few days ago a meeting was held in Miraflores to discuss the issue. The president is eager to take action along our borders to combat kidnapping. To do so we will need cooperation and assistance from the private sector, from the owners of ranches and farms, so we can maintain a network of timely information that will help us to prevent these abominable crimes.

[EL NACIONAL] In the drug traffic, our country is a transit point. The DEA thinks some members of the security forces are weak, that there is too much leniency.

[Avila Vivas] Our police and the National Guard are strict and they have been doing a great job. I am going to give my full support to this crusade and to the work of the Conacuid [National Commission Against Illicit Drug Use] which is going to increase its work during the next few months. We are not going to waste our efforts or time in saving Venezuela from the drug traffic. And it is also essential to work with the police from other countries.

About the Gulf of Venezuela problem, which is once again under discussion, Virgilio Avila Vivas says that we have excellent relations with Colombia, as with all other countries, but he did not want to venture into this foreign policy issue, which will be handled by the president and the foreign ministry.

[Avila Vivas] What I can say is that we are all interested in working out boundary problems.